

Music & Letters

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A. H. FOX STRANGWAYS

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APRIL, 1928

VOLUME IX

No. 2

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THE new Dictionary* is a musical event of some importance. The three editions do not differ much in point of shelf-room (a little under ten inches); but, as against the three million words of the first, the second and third reach four million, and the third contains nearly a hundred plates in addition. The first edition took ten years to come out, the second five years, the third five months. This meant locking up that amount of type for more than a year, a decided feat in publishing. Grove's own pioneer work began as two volumes and grew to four, and lapse of time necessitated a supplement and an index. Mr. Fuller Maitland's was planned as five, corrections of Grove were incorporated in the text where the authors had left notes, and where these corrections were by other hands they were added in brackets. In Mr. Colles's book the revisions and additions which had accumulated in fifty years were taken into the body of the article without disturbing the balance. To do this without increasing the size of the book, even with the new illustrations, was a feat in editorship.

In 1923 he got to work with a sheet-index whose area was about five foot square. There were four complete copies of the second edition annotated by experts, to digest, besides a number of corrections and suggestions, which flowed in at odd times from odd places,

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decisions to take as to what articles, or parts of articles, were out of date, in whose hands to put them and what length to make them (and to persuade the writers that this *was* the proper length), and constant watching to see that the articles did not overlap. Then the more interesting work could at last begin with articles on new men and new subjects that had come to the front since 1910. The results of these labours are discussed in the article which follows, by Mr. Howes and Mr. Hussey, and which will be concluded in the July number. I would say now, if I may, a few words about the editor's own contributions.

'Grove' has never gratified legitimate curiosity by a special index grouping the work of one contributor together. We propose to gratify it now, at any rate as regards the substantive articles. They fall into two groups—those on technical subjects and those on living musicians. The first group comprises Accompaniment, Additional Accompaniments, Air, Analytical Notes, Chamber Music, Chanting, Extemporisation, Fantasia, Harmonics, Leitmotiv, Mass, Quodlibet, besides several pages devoted to completing articles such as Symphonic Poem, Sonata, Variations, etc., and a number of little paragraphs that might have grown into articles, but saved the reader's time by not doing so. The general line they take is to remember before all things that music is an art, and accordingly a subject for taste, not for rule, and to remind the reader of phenomena rather than to analyse reasons. Thus, with Key; we may think, perhaps, that it and Mode sum up two main and divergent tendencies in the musical lay-out of whatever period, rather than successive stages; that both are as operative to-day as ever; and that they contrast as fundamentally as harmony and counterpoint do. But these would be critical reflexions, unsuited to a dictionary; and the article rightly confines itself to distinguishing the different senses of the word.

The articles on living musicians are more numerous and more important. The principal are to be found under Allen, Austin, Boughton, Casals, Coates, Davies (2), Dent, Elgar, Gatty, Holbrooke, Mackenzie, Miles, Parratt, Ronald, Sharp, Terry, Vaughan Williams, Weingartner, Wood, and a dozen more; besides Bennett (St.), Borwick, Butterworth, Kelly, and a carefully written account of Purcell. To hit the exact measure of eulogistic truth which does justice both to the subject of the article and to his contemporaries, to be alive to tendencies and yet to abstain from prophecy, to avoid dogmatism and yet leave no room for misunderstanding, and to do all this without wasting words is, perhaps, only what is expected of the editor of such a book; but it is none the less a wholly admirable thing when we have it before us. In actual bulk the editor's contributions do not exceed, perhaps, a hundred and fifty pages. We may

congratulate ourselves that by being brief and lucid they have saved our pockets and our patience more than twice that amount.

A. H. FOX STRANGWAYS.

I

The peculiar place which 'Grove' occupies among dictionaries—the friendliness and humanity of it which decline to release the enquirer after the letter without imbuing him with something of the spirit—is due to the tolerance which the original editor extended to the expression of personal opinions by his contributors. They were allowed to range, within certain obvious limits, at will over the territory allotted to them, and, being for the most part fine scholars and many of them men of literary distinction, they produced articles which were interesting as well as informative, and which fully realised Sir George Grove's ideal of providing a work of reference, which would also be a *book*, for the edification and delight of musicians, both professional and amateur.

It was inevitable, however, that the passage of time should make a radical revision of the Dictionary necessary, if it was to retain its place as a living work and not be relegated to the classical shelves, where *Johnson's Dictionary* or *Hawkins's History* are kept for occasional reference when information on contemporary matters is required. The uprising of new musicians, who could claim a place in such a work, the advance in musical scholarship, which was only in its infancy fifty years ago, and the change in ideas, which is inevitable in the course of any period of that length, are the three chief reasons that dictated a revision.

Even in 1904, when the second edition of the Dictionary was published, Mr. Fuller-Maitland was able to feel satisfied with the addition of new material, with the correction of mistakes, and with the adjustment of the balance which was lacking in the original owing to the summary treatment of the earlier letters of the alphabet in comparison with the more expansive treatment that developed as the book grew. Notwithstanding the growth of musical scholarship, which necessitated among other things an extension on the historical side backward beyond the limit of 1450 set by Grove, and the acceptance of Wagner by the majority of men, views upon music had not altered in any fundamental way from those which were held by the original contributors to the Dictionary. The great romantic movement had not, apparently, spent its force. In the years which have elapsed since then, an almost revolutionary change has occurred.

Moreover, while in the second edition it was quite possible to add

new material to the old without causing any serious confusion, the accretion of a further layer of additions and corrections would have made reference to the work difficult and unsatisfactory. Mr. Colles adopted, therefore, a more drastic method. 'Every article in the Dictionary,' he states, 'has been reconsidered and its contents viewed as material to be accepted or rejected as the case may be, but in any case to be remodelled at discretion in accordance with a definite plan of arrangement.' It is this necessity that has made his task more exacting and responsible than that of the second editor. For it meant tampering with articles each of which, to quote him again, 'embodied the considered opinion of its author and was stamped with his individuality both in its critical estimate and its literary expression.'

Before we turn to a more detailed, though still far too summary, examination of the manner in which this task has been carried out, it may be well to indicate some of the main features, both in the way of retention and alteration, which characterise the new Dictionary. First must be mentioned Sir George Grove's own articles on Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Schubert, which have been retained in their original form or with only slight modifications, such corrections or additions as were necessary to bring them up-to-date being contained in footnotes—a method whose only serious disadvantage is the minuteness of the type. Whatever one may have felt about the desirability of supplanting these articles by more modern estimates of these composers—and we confess that such a thought did occur to us—a perusal of them shows that they are lasting monuments of a great critical mind, for which it would have been very difficult indeed to find worthy substitutes. A more novel idea of Beethoven, for instance, might have been in tune with the ideas of the moment, but one may doubt whether it would have had the relative permanence of Grove's complete and judicial account.

There was one serious drawback to these immense articles in the earlier editions, and that was the difficulty which the enquirer experienced in finding some particular piece of information. Mr. Fuller Maitland made his way easier by placing dates at the head of the pages. Mr. Colles has made it simple by inserting cross-headings, as well as by providing a more complete system of cross-references, which send the reader from one article to another and ensure his finding all that the Dictionary has to say on every aspect of a given subject. It has also enabled the editor to avoid a certain amount of reduplication and in that way has saved space. These sign-posts greatly increase the value of the Dictionary as a work of reference, besides providing those who have leisure for the pursuit with the infinite fascinations of an intellectual paper-chase.

Apart from the additional articles devoted to the composers, executants and so on, who have made their mark during the past twenty-five years, there are several groups of subjects, which are now treated for the first time. The most important of these come under the heads of *Æsthetics* and *Exotic Music*.

The æsthetic problems of music have received far more attention during the present century than at any period since they were discussed by the Greek philosophers, to whom 'music' meant something very different. Although agreement on the subject has not been, and never will be, reached—it never is when art is in question—some discussion was certainly needed in order to make the Dictionary complete. The entry under *Æsthetics* is a very fair and concise statement of the problems with which all who give anything more than superficial thought to the art of music are continually being met. The author of the article is, perhaps, a little brusque in his dismissal of the metaphysicians, who in their several ways have attempted to answer the question, 'What is beauty?' To take an example, the view advanced by Croce that æsthetic experience is a kind of knowledge, a purely metaphysical doctrine, is of some importance and of immediate concern to musicians through its appearance in much serious criticism of Beethoven's third-period works. However, it must be admitted that, if the author were to do justice to the philosophers, he must have been led some way off his track, and his article, as it stands, is clear and helpful to the user of a dictionary of music.

The kindred subjects of *Absolute* and *Programme Music*, and especially the latter, are less adequately treated. A column and a half is certainly insufficient for the discussion of programme music, and the author confines himself to generalities. These require supplementing by some kind of historical survey, which would bring out the fact that most of the great composers—Mozart being, perhaps, the most conspicuous exception, unless we put the 'musical joke' into this category—have written programme music of some kind, even if it were only as *jeux d'esprit*. The writer admits that it has 'suddenly grown into a serious form of art,' but he washes his hands of any decision upon its merits. The casual reference to Beethoven, which does nothing to correct Grove's old-fashioned view (as we are led to expect by a cross-reference from the article on Beethoven), is of a piece with this 'sudden' view, and the writer fails entirely to account for the emergence of Berlioz (under whose name the limits of programme music are discussed), Liszt and Strauss. This is one of the articles to which a cross-reference, viz., to *Symphonic Poem*, might have been usefully added. For in that article the reader will find a good deal of the information and of the decision which are lacking here.

Under Exotic Music we may include, besides the learned article discussing *Byzantine Music*, which is for experts rather than for amateurs, and the important additions to our knowledge of the music and instruments of various Eastern races, a large number of articles upon Spanish subjects. Spain was not accorded a place commensurate with its importance in the earlier editions of the Dictionary for the simple reason that no one knew very much about Spanish music until the researches of Pedrell and others were made known outside Spain, largely, so far as this country is concerned, through the instrumentality of Mr. J. B. Trend, who is responsible for this section of the Dictionary. The music of America, though exotic only in the sense that most of it is not native to the United States, is another subject which may be mentioned here as having received more attention than before. We propose to reserve discussion of the illustrations, which add greatly to the interest of the Dictionary, until later in this essay. But we must note here that an alphabetical list of the contributors in the order of their initials greatly facilitates the search for the author of any given article. This is a new feature.

The omissions consist chiefly of excisions from existing articles, which gave too much space to unimportant subjects, and of the deletion of a few nonentities, about whom no one, who could not refer to more exhaustive sources, was likely to require information. There are one or two omissions, however, which are evidently accidental. The most important is the article on Antonio Caldara; and, though of less consequence, we were unable to find the note on Gay, to whom there is a cross-reference under Beggar's Opera. There are no entries under Spiritual, for which a reference to Negro Music would have sufficed, Jazz, though Rag-time is the subject of a note, or Broadcasting, which might have been allowed a few words, along with the Gramophone, under the heading of Mechanical Appliances. Nor is the advance recently made in the reproduction of music by the electrical process of recording given the mention it deserves. But, perhaps, the most striking oversight is the omission of any specific reference to Criticism as such. The subject is touched upon in the article on *Æsthetics*, but it deserves a separate discussion. Nor is it very convenient that there is no entry under folk-song or folk-dance, though these subjects are fully treated under English Folk-song and under Country Dance and Morris Dance respectively. There should have been, at least, a cross-reference to guide the enquirer, who might, as we did, reasonably search under letter F.

When the immensity of the task is considered, it is surprising, not that there are a few errors and omissions, but that there are not more, and these criticisms are offered only in order that users of the Dictionary may note them for their own guidance, and to assist the editor

in making corrections towards any further revision. In this place we may add that the proof-correcting has not been as careful as could be desired, and rather more printers' errors occur than there ought to be in a work of this authoritative description. At the same time it is very easy to understand how these misprints were passed over, since no editor could possibly correct the whole of the proofs himself, even if he were infallible enough to detect deceptive errors in dates and unfamiliar names, nor could he enforce upon all his contributors an equal standard of accuracy in the performance of this task. It is all too easy to overlook the mistakes which are so obvious to the casual reader.

II

The freedom allowed by the successive editors to their contributors is purchased at a price, which must be paid on the biographical articles. For the art of biography as applied to musicians is much less clear about its requirements than literary criticism, which demands that history, psychology and æsthetic criticism shall be blended in the same study. Musicians have not even reached the stage of being divided into schools of opinion on what lines the facts of a man's life and his artistic productions should be related. The two have a chronological connection but there is no other bridge over the gap across which 'life' and 'works' confront each other. Every biographer, therefore, forms his own idea of what is required of him in describing his subject. Some are content with bare facts—dates, names and external causes. Others realise that for so intimate a thing as music this is not enough, and that a list of works without an estimate of their worth is of small value. Others who must rely more on intuition than on science in the present state of psychological knowledge, contrive to give a complete account of the man—his outer life, his inner life, the products of both and the interaction of all three. Grove's own articles are of this higher type, though the dangers as well as the advantages of the intuitive method are shown in comments of the pattern 'Little Franz was no doubt well grounded,' &c. But an antiquarian, an imaginative and a critical mind are not always found together in one writer. It is one of the drawbacks of the expert that he is a specialist. A Dictionary must be written by experts. From which it follows that some of the biographical articles will show signs of the deficiencies of specialised knowledge. In the case of living persons or of the recently dead, the ordinary decencies forbid too close a scrutiny of their inner lives. The editor's own articles on *Boughton*, *Elgar* and *Vaughan Williams* show to what extent the

lives and works of contemporaries may be interrelated without transgressing the bounds of discretion. Some articles are predominantly critical, e.g., *Franck*, and *Debussy*, and in such cases the events of a man's life are gathered together at the beginning and the rest of the article is devoted to a critical study of his works. It is fortunate that the chronological method rarely breaks down, except for a few doubtful dates, and most of the biographies rightly proceed chronologically. We shall do the same in this part of our review. The reticence of modern biography is balanced by our unavoidable ignorance of the personalities of earlier composers. Men like Monteverde and Byrd, however, were persons of strong character, and we may regret that a little more of their personality—one with a temperamental melancholy and a rather unhappy life, the other with a tenacious gravity and wide influence—does not appear in their admirable and concise biographies. If then for one reason or another we cannot demand a complete portrait from every biographer we shall require in a dictionary all the available facts because it is a work of reference, and some criticism because the Dictionary is Grove's Dictionary.

'Back to Hucbald' has been the unuttered slogan of much modern composition. To *Hucbald*, therefore, we may turn, feeling confident that further back we need hardly go for biographical matter—if we are interested in Pythagoras we shall find a word or two about him in the article *Monochord*. Hucbald has suffered in the new edition, where the Bishop of Truro somewhat curtly, and doubtless justly, dismisses him as a hagiographer. The twelfth century *Blakesmit* and John of *Fornsete*, on the other hand, have been promoted to the status of a brief entry of their own. *Dunstable* remains as before. There is no entry under Worcester of Dom Anselm Hughes's important discovery of the school of mediæval composers who flourished there in the fourteenth century, but some reference to it will be found in the article *Motet*.

Of the great Netherlanders and the great Italians of the sixteenth century revision has gone far, for though the old articles of J. R. Sterndale-Bennett are excellent studies of their subjects, the passage of fifty years has altered the attitude to 'primitives,' and it is no longer necessary to apologise to the reader for the vital characteristics of these composers. The Rev. J. R. Milne, who has contributed full-length studies of *Josquin*, *Lassus* and *Palestrina*, has allowed himself more criticism of the music, and especially in the case of Lassus has been able to throw sidelights on the personality of the man. In the case of Palestrina the tendency has been in the opposite direction. Mr. Milne has had to scrutinise the too imaginative narrative of Baini, to restrain the sentimentalising of some episodes in the composer's

career and to discount the importance formerly claimed for the Council of Trent. In the new article both the early life (*i.e.*, before 1551) and the later works like 'The Lamentations' and the 'Hymnal,' receive more generous treatment and so make the survey more balanced and complete. The article on Lassus has been expanded from nineteen columns to thirty-six, the increase being absorbed by criticism and character study, of which the comments on the music of 1555 may be taken as an excellent example. Much that was doubtful or unknown twenty-five years ago about the early life has now been cleared up by the researches of M. van den Borren, Dr. Sandberger and others, and the article is now a model dictionary article, combining the three elements—facts, portraiture and discussion of the music—with copious references to available English performing editions of his madrigals.

The lesser men have for the most part been left with the old initials at the foot, but their importance has been reviewed in a comprehensive account of the *Madrigal*, which also places them in their proper relationships to each other. *Gesualdo*, a 'modernist' who makes a new appeal to the 'moderns' of to-day, however, demands a new article, and this, in swift, clear and concise criticism, places him in the niche which his modern admirers have hollowed out for him, while cautiously warning us that he may demand concessions from modern, as from contemporary, ears.

The same author writes on Monteverde, who has shared in the revival of interest in pre-classical composers. Rockstro's old article could not treat *Monteverde* otherwise than as a figure in a history book. The bibliography (which omits Parry's paper to the Musical Association, 1915-16) shows that first-hand study of him belongs to the twentieth century, while d'Indy's revival in France and the more recent Oxford productions of two of his operas demanded a treatment of him as a living, not as a dead, composer. The 'dual nature' of the man and the 'swift changes' which succeeded one another in the music of the early seventeenth century are taken as the key to his vitality, and his resurrection means some readjustment of the views previously held about his historical significance. We hear nothing of the invention of the dominant seventh, and have to consider the view of Adler and Goldschmidt, adopted by the author, that the orchestration of 'Orfeo' is rather a 'consummation of traditional technique than the starting-point of new methods.'

The English contemporaries of these Italian composers have had the advantage of the supervision of Dr. E. H. Fellowes, but many of the original articles by Mr. Squire and Mr. Arkwright have been retained. The article on *Byrd* contains some new facts, such as the perplexing business of his alleged appointment to the office of 'Lord

of the Tappes' at Cambridge, and some critical opinions of his work are quoted, but the actual music—notably the instrumental music which is interesting for its use of folk-song and of variation form, and the Latin church music in which his genius found its highest expression—is not discussed. The article on *Gibbons* is new in consequence of increased knowledge, which is here presented on first-hand authority; so is the article on *Farnaby*, but here insufficient attention is paid to his virginal music which entitles him to be called the father of the romantic school of writers for the keyboard, the forerunner of Chopin and Schumann, and even perhaps of Debussy. The old articles on *Morley* and *Bull* are retained, but to the latter has been added one of the most attractive portraits in all five volumes. Of all the Elizabethans the one who in modern times has avenged his former neglect and is regularly heard in modern concerts is *Dowland*, and to the account of his life a judicious and enthusiastic discussion of his songs is appended, and attention is rightly paid to him in the article *Song*.

A similar but more elaborate discussion of his style has been added to the biography of *Purcell*, taken over from Mr. Fuller-Maitland, which does in fact already contain a considerable amount of running commentary on the music. There is, however, nothing redundant in the new essay, illustrated copiously with musical examples, of which the immediate occasion is to examine the claim of Purcell to be ranked as 'the greatest and most original of English composers'—a description which still stands at the head of the article although the Elizabethans, in particular Byrd and Weelkes, have in the last quarter of a century put in their claims to that proud title. Of the modern claimant, Elgar, the Dictionary now says briefly 'a great composer.' The most serious difficulty that Purcell's supporters have to meet is that owing to the conditions of his life and times his music is for the most part *useless* to the modern music-lover, and that his work except for one supreme masterpiece, a handful of songs and a little of the church music, suffers from the same disabilities as a journalist's reprinted pieces. Against this has to be set the fact, made clear in this essay, that Purcell is the first of the moderns, and unlike the Elizabethans speaks a language which all can understand without making any special preliminary study or subsequent allowances, much as in literature Shakespeare is intelligible in a way that Chaucer (say) is not. It is true that Byrd came at the end of an epoch and Purcell at the beginning of a new, yet it seems impossible to allow that Purcell's was a more original mind than Byrd's, however we may decide about the other epithet 'great.' Byrd is the greatest pioneer in the whole history of music except Monteverde, and if we are bound to admit with the writer the daring quality of Purcell's harmony we

can claim as much for Weelkes. But if we neglect all the rest of Purcell's works written *ad hoc*, and contemplate 'Dido and Æneas' alone, we must recognise that the Elizabethans, who worked in small forms, can put nothing of such sustained greatness into the scale against it. There is something in size even in so qualitative a thing as music, and this perfect masterpiece, unequalled until Mozart, reaches a high-water-mark attained by no other composer, not even by Elgar whose works undoubtedly 'hold the attention of his countrymen more decisively than do those of any other native composer' (to quote the Dictionary again). Byrd lived to be 80, Elgar is already over 70, Purcell died at the age of 36. Had he lived only as long as Weelkes, who was 48 when he died, perhaps there would have been none of these doubtful valuations.

Bach and Handel both receive completely new treatment. The varying estimates of Handel which the last thirty years or so have seen, almost turn a philosopher into a cynic and make him ask whether 'value' and 'fashion' are not synonymous. The article in the 1904 Grove begins complacently 'HANDEL, GEORGE FREDERICK, one of the greatest composers the world has ever seen,' words which crystallised the opinion of a century which neglected all but a very few of his works. Hardly had they been published when Dr. Walker fluttered the dovescotes with his discriminating and trenchant criticism, scattering praise and blame right and left, rescuing pages of the operas from oblivion, dismissing much that was held sacred as perfunctory, dull and irritating, and noting without approval that his reputation had then (1907) already declined in musical circles. More recently those same circles have begun to revolve in the opposite direction. In Germany the reaction from Wagnerism has directed interest to the operas and to the neglected oratorios. Everywhere in a post-war world romanticism is discredited and people are beginning to talk of a Handel revival. Mr. Scott Goddard, on the whole, follows the lines of Dr. Walker's criticism, agreeing with him that insistence on the oratorios as the true expression of Handel's genius does less than justice to the music he wrote for the stage in the earlier part of his life in England. He takes a rather more favourable view of the operas as wholes, which is justified, so far as it has gone, by their skilful production in Germany, and he pays more attention to the instrumental works, especially the organ concertos. At the end of a concise article, in which evidence is marshalled in business-like manner within brackets, he adds a judicious section on Handel's general characteristics as man and musician in order to give further ballast to a reputation that has run into a period of storms.

His contemporary, J. S. Bach, who came up on to the crest as Handel went down into the trough, has as yet shown no serious signs

of being sucked down from his eminence by the passing waves of fashion. That satisfactory state of affairs, however, is hardly warrant enough for the complete omission of any discussion of his music in a biography which is a full but bare chronological record of his works and doings. In two places it is suggested that his music has a 'romantic' quality, and some remarks on his orchestration are less misleading than those in the article *Orchestration*. Nor does the personality of the man shine through the details of his life so tightly chronicled here. We are not given even the dry bones of criticism which are sometimes useful, such as the original sources of the transferred and remodelled sections of the B minor Mass. The most valuable piece of musicology is the treatment of the six motets, which the author assigns to special memorial services. It is notoriously difficult to say the same thing twice with equal force and freshness, and Prof. Terry was, at the time of writing this article, also writing at greater length his biography and his studies of the church cantatas. Under the circumstances, therefore, we think it a pity that the present article was not supplemented by a critical study from another pen, as in the case of Purcell, or by a series of contributions from specialists like Dr. Whittaker, Sir Hugh Allen, and Mr. Harold Samuel, similar to the postscript to *Grieg* which Mr. Walter Ford has written on the songs.

The articles on *Haydn* and *Mozart* provide probably as good material as one could find for a comparison of the old with the new 'Grove.' The original articles on both these composers were written by C. F. Pohl. Both were overhauled for the second edition by the same reviser, Pohl having died in the meantime. To the Haydn article very little has been done, apart from the amplification of a few points and the addition of others. The biography of Haydn is admirable and fairly complete, though it is odd to find that his important contact with Mozart in Vienna was passed over altogether by Pohl and had to be inserted in a brief paragraph by the reviser. In spite of such additions, however, there is no serious sense of patchiness, and Pohl's summing-up of Haydn's method of working and of his position is well done. But we feel that Pohl stopped short just when he had reached the most important part of his task. We are told a great deal about Haydn, the man, but far too little about his music, concerning which nothing very vital is said. There is nothing about his influence upon Mozart or the reaction of Mozart upon him, and very little of importance about his contribution to the development of the symphony and the quartet. For it is not sufficient to be told that he brought the quartet 'to perfection' and of the symphony that 'he enlarged its sphere, determined its form, enriched and developed its capacities with the versatility of true genius.' Such generalisations are true

enough, but it would be more useful if we were told in concrete terms to what these enlargements and enrichments amounted, and from what origins the developments came. Since he gives us no reason to suppose the contrary, we suspect that Pohl adhered to the old view that Haydn more or less invented the symphonic form on his own initiative. A cross-reference to the articles on *Stamitz* and *Richter*, or, better still, to that on *Symphony*, would have served as a corrective. There is, by the way, no article on the Mannheim School as such, and we think it deserved a short historical note in view of its now recognised importance.

Pohl's article on Mozart has been entirely rewritten, the valuable parts of the original being retained. The result is a model of what is desirable for a work of this nature. For we do not expect to find in 'Grove' the development of disputable theories on small points—for example, the contention of T. de Wyzewa concerning Haydn's 'Farewell,' 'La Passione' and 'Trauer' symphonies, though his article on the subject in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' might well have been included in the bibliography. Indeed, one of the Dictionary's strongest points is its way of dismissing the inessentials, a noteworthy example of which is its treatment of the question of Wagner's paternity. So the writer upon Mozart presents us with a survey of the biographical facts and a well-balanced criticism of the music. Out of the narrative of Mozart's life, which tells us all we need to know without excess of detail, the composer arises as a living personality, while the assessment of his achievement is just and exceedingly well expressed. The writer has paid special attention to those works, which have been unjustly neglected, and his remarks on the pianoforte sonatas and concertos are discriminating. As an example of his criticism we quote the following:—

To do justice to Mozart's pianoforte compositions something more is required than the fastidious and rather finicking elegance with which it was long the custom to perform them. The mature works, at any rate, admit of the employment of the full range of tone at the modern pianist's command, and their rapid alternations of mood and frequent imitation of orchestral effects call for a quick brain and a responsive touch for their proper rendering.

The accessories to this article are of exceptional value. The list of portraits is accompanied by adequate notes on their history and authenticity, while the bibliography includes brief estimates of the value of the various works—a plan which might have been more generally adopted with advantage.

We could wish that the articles on *Schikaneder* and *da Ponte*, Mozart's librettists, had been revised by the same learned authority.

The question of Giesecke's contribution to the libretto of 'Die Zauberflöte' is not settled by the bald statement that Schikaneder adapted it from a piece by Giesecke, even though the latest researches of von Komorzinski seem to discredit Giesecke's claim to a large share in the work. The extraordinary career of Lorenzo da Ponte is treated with more gusto and understanding, but there is no appreciation of his exceptional skill as an opera-librettist, and the bibliography does not include the available editions of his amusing, if not always truthful, memoirs. These two articles have been selected for mention as being typical of the shorter notices carried over from the last edition, which have not always been brought into line with the more important articles on kindred subjects.

FRANK HOWES
DYNELEY HUSSEY.

(To be concluded.)

THE FIRST ENGLISH SONGS

GODRIC, the hermit of Finchale, though he was the author of the earliest known musical settings of English words, has been passed over in silence by the historians of English music. All good histories of English Literature give an account of St. Godric, as being one of the first Englishmen to write verse with rhyme and metre, and many of them add that the principal MSS. of his life and miracles also contain the notes of his songs; yet no dictionary of music, English, French, or German, so much as mentions his name. Dictionaries of music are apt to meet with extremely unintelligent criticism, and I do not propose to add to it. After all, St. Godric is only the composer—if indeed he really was the composer—of some of those fragments of what Dr. Ernest Walker calls 'the earliest stammering utterances' of English music, the precursors and contemporaries of 'Sumer is icumen in.'

There are more of these twelfth and thirteenth century English songs in existence than is generally imagined. The collection of 'Early Bodleian Music' begins with three songs with French words dating from 1185 and 1225—a period at which the official language of England was Norman French—and follows with:

Mirie it is while sumer ilast
With fughelēs song;
Oc nu necheth windēs blast
And weder strong.
Ei, ei, what this nicht is long!
And ich with wel michel wrong
Soregh and murne and fast.
(*circ.* 1225.)

Oc=but. fugeles=fowls, birds. necheth=nigheth, approacheth. weder=
weather. michel=much. soregh=sorrow.

The next is in the British Museum (Arundel MS. 248, f. 154) as well as in the Bodleian; the two versions differ slightly, both in words and music:

Worldēs blis ne last no throwē,
 It went and wit away anon;
 The langer that ics it knowē
 The lasse ics findē pris thereon.
 For al it is imeind mid care,
 With sorwen and mid ivel fare,
 And attē lastē poure and bare
 It lat man, wan it ginth agon.

Throwe=time. went=wends, turns. wit=departs. ics=I (*ich*). lasse=less. pris=price. imeind=mingled. mid=with (*mit*). sorwen=sorrows. ivel=evil. poure=poor. lat=leaves. ginth=beginneth. agone=to pass away, be gone.

' Foweles in the frith ' is better known :

Fowelēs in the frith,
 The fisses in the flod,
 And I mon waxē wod;
 Mulch sorwē I walkē with,
 For best of bon and blod.

Mon=must. wod=mad. mulch=much. sorwe=sorrow. bon=bone. blod=blood.

The musical setting of this for two voices, was printed by Wooldridge in the *Oxford History of Music*, vol. ii, p. 101, and also by Dr. Ernest Walker in his *History of Music in England*, p. 12.

The British Museum, besides ' Sumer is icumen in ' (Harley MS. 978) and the ' Songs of St. Godric ' (Royal MS. 5, F. vii), has a late thirteenth century English version of the Stabat Mater :

Stond wel moder under rodē

and a slightly later setting for two voices :

Jesu Cristes mildē moder
 Stud biheld hire son on rodē
 That he was ipinēd on.

This is printed in the *Oxford History of Music* (vol. ii, p. 102), and in *Early English Harmony* (vol. ii); while the following (the last two stanzas), printed in the first volume (p. 316) and in the lively little *History of Music* by Stanford and Forsyth (p. 131), is in the British Museum, Arundel MS. 248, f. 155.

Quen of evene, for thi blissē,
 Lithe al hurē sorinessē
 And went hur yvel al into gud.

Bring hus, moder, to thi sonē;
 Mak hus evre wit him wonē
 That hus boutē wit this blud.

Evene=heaven. lithe=soothe. hure=our. went=turn. yvel=evil. hus=us. wone=take delight in, enjoy. bote=bought.

Five other middle English lyrics, the so-called 'Prisoner's Lament,' are found in a MS. in the Guildhall (*Liber de Antiquis Legibus*, f. 160 b.), which dates from about 1270; while the 'Angelus ad Virginem,' in a setting for three voices—full of fifths and seconds—in the Cambridge University Library, is printed in *Early English Harmony* and the *Oxford History of Music* (vol. ii, p. 106). It was a very popular song, well known to Chaucer's pilgrims—and it deserved to be, for the tune could be recognised almost anywhere as being completely and characteristically English.

It had been known for more than a hundred years before Chaucer wrote, and described the Clerk of Oxenford singing it in his room at night and accompanying himself on the psaltery*; and about 1260 it had been fitted with English words (Arundel MS. 248, f. 154) which through the necessity of following the Latin exactly, so as to fit the music, have made a delightful and memorable English stanza:

Ga - bri - el from hea - ven King sent to the mai - de sue - re
 Brough - to him this ful bi - ding and faire he - gen Ave ma - ri - a
 Hail be thou ful of grace a - right. For God is
 some, this hope - ne Light, for man - nes Lov - er will man be - come, and
 to - ken flash of the maid - en bright. Ma - ken free for to
 mak - en of sinne and de - les might.

* Chaucer, *The Miller's Tale*, line 27; and see *Grove's Dictionary*, 3rd ed., art. 'Accompaniment.'

Angelus ad Virginem.

Gabriel, from hevenē King
 Sent to the maidē swetē,
 Broughtē hire blisful tiding
 And faire he 'gan hire greten :
 " Heil be thu, ful of grace aright,
 For Godes sone, this hevenē light,
 For mannes loven
 Will man becomen,
 And taken flesh of the maiden bright;
 Maken fre for to maken
 Of sinne and deulēs might."

Hevene=MS. *evene*. broughte=MS. *broute*. hire=her. he=MS. *the*.
 greten=to greet. aright=MS. *arith*. light=MS. *lith*. will=MS. *wile*.
 becomen=MS. *bicomen*. flesh=MS. *fles*. bright=MS. *brith*, perhaps
 'birth.' sinne=MS. *senne*. deulēs=grief's (*deuil*). might=MS. *mith*, per-
 haps 'mirth.'

The others may be of no great musical interest in themselves, as far as they affect us to-day : but they are of decided interest as showing something of the background of secular music in thirteenth century England against which stands 'Sumer is icumen in.' It is generally agreed now that the melody which forms the basis of this is a pure folksong tune of popular and not ecclesiastical origin,* while the Latin words were added later; so that any composition with English words of an earlier date must have some interest, even though the melodies are not definitely identifiable as folksong. The date of 'Sumer is icumen in' is placed between 1220 and 1240. Godric died in 1170, so that his three songs, apart from any interest they may have of themselves, are worth considering if only as ancestors of the famous *rota* copied by the Monk of Reading.

Godric had a varied and interesting career as merchant, sailor, and hermit;† but his music forms a very small part of his life and should rather be regarded as one of his miracles. *The Life and Miracles of St. Godric, Hermit of Finchale*, was first compiled twenty-six years after his death by Geoffrey, a monk of Durham. It was dedicated to a Prior of Finchale who died in 1196, and must therefore have been written before that date. Geoffrey had seen Godric when he was alive. 'I saw him (he says) as a big man when I was a boy, and as an old man when I was a youth, and by then the recollection of so many

* Ernest Walker. *A History of Music in England*, p. 9.

† J. Zupitza. *Cantus Beati Godrici. Englische Studien*, vol. ix, pp. 401-432. (1888.)

visions had sweetened his mind.' One form which these visions took was, as we shall see, music.

Geoffrey's biography of Godric was drawn from written sources as well as personal recollection, from accounts left by Reginald, a monk of Durham, and another ecclesiastic, named Germanus, Prior of Durham, who died in 1189. Reginald's biography exists in three MSS., two of which include musical notes. It was written during the life-time of St. Godric, principally at the desire of Ailred,* abbot of Rievaulx, who had died in 1166, four years before Godric himself. Reginald wrote everything down while it was fresh in his memory and took great trouble (so he informs us) to preserve only those facts which reached him on trustworthy evidence, and those which he honestly believed to be true. His ideas of evidence may have been peculiar; but he lived in what are sometimes called the ages of faith, and as regards the music at any rate, he is reasonable enough.

Godric was born about 1065 at 'Hanapol' in Norfolk, a name which cannot now be found on the Ordnance map, and the only name at all like it, Hampole, is a village near Doncaster. If, however, for Hanapol we read Walpole, Godric will have been born at one of the two villages of that name near King's Lynn. His parents were of English (Saxon) origin; his father's name was Æilward, his mother's Ædwen. Godric was the eldest child; he had a brother William and a sister called Burchwene, or Burgwen. He began life as a pedlar. Through the countryside and wherever country people were gathered together he began to wander with small merchandise (*mercibus minutis*); while later he became a familiar figure on market day, and succeeded so well that 'with several partners he acquired a half share in a merchant ship and a quarter share in another.' He went to sea for the first time about 1080, plying between England, Scotland, Denmark, and Flanders. He had a faculty for forecasting changes of the weather, and thus 'through his skill in nautical science, the office of helmsman was given to him.'

Hardy he was, and wise to undertake;

And, like Chaucer's Shipman,

With many a tempest had his beard been shake.
He knew well all the havens, as they were,
From Gothland to the Cape of Finisterre,
And every creek in Britain and in Spain.

* Ailred (1109-66) was the author of *Speculum Charitatis*, a passage in which proves the use of harmony and of the 'Hocket,' and implies the interspersing of rests and the knowledge of time divisions. He also shows that attempts had been made in his time at independent voice-parts.—Henry Davey, *History of English Music*, 2nd ed., 1922, p. 17.

After sixteen years at sea (1096) he visited Jerusalem, which had just been won by the first Crusaders. By this time, however, he was known as a pirate. 'When we consider (says the *Dictionary of National Biography*) the close relationship that in those days existed between piracy and commerce, there is no need to doubt his identity with the "Gudericus pirata de regno Angliæ," with whom Baldwin I of Jerusalem, after his great defeat on the plains of Ramlah, sailed from Arsuf to Jaffa on May 29, 1102.'

After this voyage, Godric made the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela when the cathedral had hardly been begun and the turbulent archbishop Gelmírez, when not taking a decisive part in local politics, was dining quietly in his great hall adorned with sculptured musicians. The famous 'Gate of Glory,' with its band of twenty-four old men talking and tuning their instruments, was not begun until sixty years afterwards. After a second pilgrimage to Rome, Godric was for a short time steward to a man of position in his native place. He gave up this employment, however, and made yet another pilgrimage to Rome, taking his mother with him.

On his return he resolved to become a hermit. He wandered into the North Country, stayed for some time at Carlisle, and then shared a cell with another hermit, named Æilric, near Bishop Auckland, until his companion died. Then one day he heard the voice of St. Cuthbert and seemed to see him in the flesh. 'Go again to Jerusalem (the voice said) and be crucified with the Lord. Then return and seek out a place in the woods near Durham, called Finchale.' After severe mortification of the flesh he set out, living on crusts and water, 'neither did he change his garments nor wash himself until he came to the Lord's sepulchre.' Then he went down to the banks of Jordan and with the sacred water washed the sweat of travel from his body. His shoes fell to pieces when he took them off; he resolved never to wear shoes again. On his return to England he first built himself a wooden hut near Whitby; then, 'since he was often molested by the owner of the land,' he went on to Durham, where he became, first, bell-ringer and sacristan in the church of St. Ægidius and then obtained some employment in the cathedral church of St. Mary. Here 'he interested himself in the boys learning the first elements of their letters'; so that 'those things which he had once learnt he fixed more firmly in his mind and certain others which before he had not known he learnt there by hearing the boys reading and singing. In a short time, therefore, he became so proficient that in psalms, hymns, and certain prayers he appeared firm and certain, as much as he thought sufficient for himself.'

Yet the truth is that he was almost illiterate. He must have been able to read the Latin psalter, and perhaps he understood something

of conversational Latin and French, though to his contemporaries and biographers those accomplishments seemed to be miracles. Yet even his friends describe him as being altogether ignorant of music (*omnino ignarus musicae*). How his music came to him we shall see.

One day he heard a shepherd say to another: 'Let us go and water our flocks in Finchale.' The vision of St. Cuthbert seemed to be confirmed; he gave the shepherds all the money he had—one small coin—in order that they might show him the way. 'The place was bounded by the River Wear on the east, north, and west, nor did it leave any part free except the south; and in that bend the place can be approached, although it is difficult for travellers to find it, indeed from the south, by which approach to it is made, it is touched closely by the dense shade of a high wood, in which at that time no road existed.'

Finchale (which is properly called 'Finkel' and which is said to mean what a student of German would take it to mean, the place of finches) lies about three miles north of Durham. The abbey, now in ruins, was founded in 1196 for Benedictine monks, and dedicated to St. Godric who had died twenty-six years before. He himself lived about a mile above the existing ruins: the site of his cell, still called 'Godric's Garth' was granted him in 1110 by the Bishop of Durham, and there, in 1149 he built a church, connecting it by a cloister with his cell and with an oratory, where he died on May 21, 1170. There are said to be still traces of these buildings; but the ruins most visible are those of a monastery begun in 1242.

The place seemed suited to his needs, and through his friends he received permission from the Bishop to settle there. Here he lived for sixty years, and for the first twenty he was quite alone. He built a hut and a chapel; he made a garden and cultivated it; he ground his own corn to make his bread but never ate it for several months, and his flour was mixed with ashes. He ate no meat and drank little water; a large stone served him for both table and pillow. In later life, he showed himself a good host to his visitors and a good friend to his assistants, and even to his enemies. He kept salmon nets in the Wear, and one evening found a poacher in the act of taking a fish. Not only did he not stop him, but made signs (for he never spoke at night) to encourage the man in what he was doing. He even helped him to put the salmon into a sack, and the sack upon his shoulder. It must have been a big fish.

Godric wore the regulation hair shirt, and also an iron cuirass which he never took off from year's end to year's end, even at night; he wore out three of them in the course of fifty years. But still the devil tempted him, and he sometimes spent the whole of a winter's night up to his neck in cold water. Later on, he kept a barrel of

water in the chapel, so that he might leap into it when the moment of temptation arrived. If this method failed, he would throw himself upon a bed of thorns, 'so that the sting of his burning desire might be softened, and through the multitude of scratches concupiscence might be converted into pain.' The devil kept him occupied. He sent an angel to box the holy man's ears; he came in person and disturbed him at his orisons. He appeared in the form of a pilgrim, a peasant, a goldsmith, a quack doctor, and a beautiful woman. He also took the form of a bear, an ox, an eagle and a crow, and even showed himself in the flesh surrounded by fiery flames. There were also innumerable little black dwarfs, and monsters with human heads and horses' necks, or with the bodies of lions and the feet of sheep. He threw holy water at them, but it was no use; only his steadfastness could drive them away, and they left so horrible a smell behind them that it was scarcely to be borne, even by a long-suffering hermit.

These diabolical appearances are not mentioned here idly. They have an intimate relationship with his songs, for the first of them was revealed to him as a charm against the powers of evil. One day (the chronicler Reginald relates) the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene appeared to him and taught him a song with its melody (*canticum cum cantici ipsius melo*). It was bright sunshine, and the holy man was praying before the altar. He looked up and saw on either side a young woman, each looking at the other. They were of surpassing beauty and clad in shining white raiment; they were not very big, but rather seemed as maidens of tender years. After an hour had passed, they came down to where the hermit knelt. 'We will protect you (they said) until the end of the world, and stand by you whenever you have need of us.' Then (says Reginald) 'the Mother of Mercy taught him a new song, so that as often as he might be wearied with grief or might fear to be overcome by temptation, he should remember to console himself with the sweetness of that song.'

The song, then, is a magic formula for use against evil spirits. Reginald adds that he had heard the story from Godric's own lips, and that the hermit had often sung this song and the others to him with tears in his eyes. He specially states that the songs had English words, 'all of which are composed to a rhythmical air (*rithmico tenore*, main theme), and the hearers are to observe that the songs imitate certain musical sounds by their melody.* This might mean that the song was to be sung with an improvised descant, and Giraldus Cambrensis (whatever his words really mean) specially mentions Northumbria as a district in which at that time it

* *Textus vero verborum, quibus canticum illud componitur, verbis anglie lingue contextitur. Quae omnia rithmico tenore contextuntur et melo cantici quosdam sonos musicos audientibus imitari videntur.*

Angelus a dunt Altraris

Angelus
Kyrieleyson. suavit. Xpisteleison.

Sor. Crist and saunt marie spa on seamel me velle par ic on pitee ne fide

pid mine bare fore iædie. Anglikyriel. Xpistal. Anglikyriel. Xpistal. So

ro. Crist and saunt marie. Et sup. Cantus bi bodria de ssa maria.

Santæ marie uirgine moder. In carnis nazarene puto schuld hap pin
Osa mana mgo mgt ihs xpi nazarene. ptepe. tuct. mha. tuit

godric. opfang bring heilich pib be ill godel richte. **S**antæ marie
fufpe fufpe. stete am mgy rom.

Xpistal bur martines denhad moders fur. dilt minn same rye in min mod. bring

me pinne pib se selb oes. Cantus eulfoem de ssa Nicholao

Santæ nicholaoz gods drud. ymbre us saunt sone hus. at bi bruch at bi bare.

Santæ nicholaoz bring vs vcl bare.

was usual to sing in two parts. Godric's song, whether it was intended to be sung as a solo, or in unison, or with an improvised descant, is the second in the MS. which is here reproduced in facsimile by kind permission of the authorities at the British Museum.

Cantus beati Godrici de Sancta Maria.

I.

Saintē Mariē Virginē,
 Moder Iesu Cristes Nazarenē,
 Onfo, schild, help thin Godric,
 Onfong bring heglic
 With the in Godēs riche.*

Moder=mother. onfo, onfong=receive (*empfangen, umfängen*). schild=shield, protect. thin=thine. heglic=gloriously, or quickly; or perhaps, 'highly.' The Latin versions give *glorioso*, or *cito*. (Or, 'protectingly': *hege*, Engl. hedge.) riche=realm (*Reich*).

Cantus beati Godrici de Sancta Maria. Harley MS. 322.

Sainte Ma-ri-e — Vir-gins — Vir-gi — ne
 mo-der Je-su Crys-tes Na-za-rene — Na-za-re-ne
 on-fo schild, help thin God-ric [Royal, S F VII]
 on-fong bring he-gi-lich with the in God es-ri-che [Harley. 322]
 on-fong bring he-gli-che with the in-e God es-rych. *

* Harley MS. 322, f. 74 b. (12th cent.) reads thus:

Onfong bring hegliche
 With the ino Godes rych.

Douce MS. 207, f. 125 b. (13th cent.) gives:

onfang bring heali
 with the in godes riche.

and Cambridge University Library Mm. IV 28, f. 149 a (12th-13th cent.):

on fo scild help thin godric
 on fang bring hehtlic
 with the i godes Riche.

II.

Saintē Mariē Cristes bur,
 Maidenēs clenhad, moderēs flur;
 Dilie min sinnē, rix in min mod,
 Bring me to winnē with the selfd God.

Bur=kinswoman, fellow citizen (*Bauer, Mitbürger*)? Norfolk people say 'bor' as an affectionate address (and Godric was a Norfolk man); or it may be connected with *gebären* (to bear a child). The explanation 'bower,' sometimes given, is supported by Latin versions (Douce 207, and *Corpus Christi*, Cambridge) which translate 'bur' by *thalamus*. clenhad=cleanness, purity. moderes flur=flower of a mother. Dilie=blot out. Douce MS., 207, f. 125 b, has *deliuere* (deliver). rix=rule (Anglo-Saxon, *rixian*). Douce 207: *regne* (reign). mod=mind, mood. winne=find the way (Old Norse, *vinna*), cf. 'to winnen att Crist,' quoted by the N.E.D. Or perhaps winne=bliss (*Wonne*), and Douce 207 reads: 'brig me to blisse wit thi self god.' selfd=thysself?



The first of Godric's songs in the MS. commemorates the occasion upon which his sister Burgwen appeared to him and sang, after her death. Reginald relates that when Burgwen died, her brother was somewhat anxious as to the future of her soul; he mourned day and night and prayed God to show him how she fared before the judgment seat. One night a deep sleep fell upon him, though his eyes were open, and he saw as it were two men in white raiment who entered the chapel leading the ghost of Burgwen between them. She stood before the altar with an angel on either side of her, and after each had chanted *Kyrie eleyson, Christe eleyson*, she sang to him in a sweet voice, and in English, as follows:

Soror.

III.

Crist and Saintē Mariē
 Swa on scamel me ileddē,
 That ic on this erthē ne sildē
 With minē barē fote itreddē.

Swa on scamel=thus protected, or so on my throne (*scamnum*). iledde=
 led. ic=I. erthe=earth. ne silde=should not. fote=foot. itredde=tread.
 (The MS. reads *itredie*.)

Brit. Mus. Royal MS. s. F. VII, fol. 85 recto

ANGELUS *a dextris altaris.*ANGELUS *a sinistris.*

Ky - ri - e - ley - son. Chris - te e - ley - son.
 SOROR
 Crist and Sainte Ma - ri - - - - e
 swa on sca-mel me i. led - - - - de
 that ic on this er - - - - the ne sil - - - - de
 with mi-ne ba-re fo-te i tred - - - - de.

The last song, a song to St. Nicholas of Bari, patron of sailors, is found only in the British Museum MS. Reginald the biographer did not know it, or he would certainly have quoted it in the chapter in which he describes how St. Nicholas appeared to Godric in a vision. Reginald was once with Godric at Easter time, to read the service to him. That night he heard him singing 'with a loud and jubilant voice,' and calling upon the name of St. Nicholas; and next morning he was told that angels had come down from heaven to the grave of Christ and had sung there, St. Nicholas being with them. Godric could not restrain himself from joining in; indeed, St. Nicholas (he declared) had invited him to do so, 'since it was meet and right that the voices of men of good will should join together with the voices of angels.'

Cantus ejusdem de sancto Nicholao.

IV.

Saintē Nicolaēs, Godes drud,
 Tymbre us fairē sconē hus.
 At thi burth, at thi bare,
 Saintē Nicolaēs, bring us wel thare

Drud=friend, lover. tymbre=timber, build. scone=fine (*schön*). hus=house. burth=birth. bare=bier, or shrine.

The late W. P. Ker proposed the reading:

At thi burgh, at thi Bari,
 St. Nicholas was patron of the 'burgh' of Bari in the south of Italy.

Cantus ejusdem de Sancto Nicholao. (Royal ms 5 f. iii fol 85^r)

The musical notation consists of four staves of music in a medieval style, with square neumes on a four-line red staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Sain te Ni - co - la - es, God - es drud.

tym - bre us fai - - re sco - ne hus,

at thi burgh at thi Ba - re

Sain - te Ni - co - la - es bring us wel thare

The hymns of St. Godric, besides being the oldest pieces of English verse of which a musical setting has been preserved, are also among the oldest to show both rhyme and metre instead of alliteration. With them, but earlier perhaps by a century or more, is the boat song of King Canute:

Merie sungen munechēs binnen Ely,
 Tha Cnut chyning rew therby;
 'Roweth, cnihtēs, noer the land,
 And herē we thes munechēs sang.'

Muneces=monks. binnen=within. chyning=king. cnihtes=knights. noer=near.

This is handed down to us by Thomas, the monk of Ely, who wrote about 1166. It is sung to this day (he says) with many more words, publicly and in chorus, and remembered in proverbs.* Unfortunately

* Quae usque hodie in choris publice cantantur et in proverbii memorantur.

Thomas did not give the music of the song, and neither the words nor the notes are to be found anywhere else. Godric has been more fortunate, for the notes of all four songs are preserved in the British Museum (Royal MS. 5, f. vii), while Harley MS. 922, gives the music of 'Saintē Mariē Virginē.' The page on which the four songs are found was published in facsimile by Professor Saintsbury in 1906, as the frontispiece to his great 'History of English Prosody.' It consists of square and diamond-shaped black notes on a stave of four red lines, with the C or B flat signature. The Latin words have been added later, in a clumsy hand.

In the transcriptions which have been given here, all the notes are treated as being of equal value, i.e., the music is assumed to be plain song. That, at any rate, is the Benedictine theory; yet modern research, and the most recent pronouncement of one of the greatest living authorities on the subject, Dr. Peter Wagner,* point to the possibility that plain song, too, should be regarded as 'measured' music. It seems that the Latin neumes were, from the beginning, not only melodic signs, but rhythmical signs as well; and their rhythmic elements were 'longs' and 'breves.' Though they were derived, in form, from accents, they also had an important function with syllabic feet, which are composed of longs and shorts, i.e., 'longs' and 'breves.' A tenth century commentator carries on this teaching, and states that the *virga* (tailed neume) and the *punctum* (square, or diamond-shaped) are expressly used to differentiate the longer and shorter sounds; while about 1800 Walter Odington affirms that the neumes were invented to distinguish longs from breves, while the collected pronouncements of the theorists up to the thirteenth century all agree that the neumes as such, without any special marks of rhythmical value, express longs and breves and combinations of these notes. 'The method of the Benedictines (Dr. Wagner concludes), which ultimately depends upon the mathematical equality of the duration of the notes, even in groups and ligatures, can no longer be regarded as the original method of performance; so that the plain song system should really be considered as a metrical system, one in which longs and breves can follow one another in the most varied free combinations.' Every song (it was laid down) must be exactly measured; *omne melos more metri diligentur mensurandum est*; and Guido of Arezzo, the inventor of the stave, taught that the neumes, when carefully written, should exactly represent the different rhythmical groups.

When we try to approach the songs of St. Godric from this position, two difficulties immediately present themselves: neither the rhythm

* In Adler's *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (1924), pp. 79 ff.

of the verse nor the notation of the music are at all clear. In the first song, there is no doubt as to the rhythm; the lines should scan trochaically, long-breve; long-breve; thus:

Sáintē|Mári|é Vir|gīnē
 Swa on|scamel|me i|leddē,
 That I|on this|erthē ne|sildē
 With||minē|barē|fotē i|treddē.

i.e., in what Aubry, Beck and Wooldridge, following the earlier theorists called the 'first rhythmic mode.' (Lines 3 and 4 each contain a three-syllable foot, and line 4 the anacrusis.) The musical notation, however, gives no clue whatever to the rhythm; the notes are all, apparently, longs.

With the second song the opposite is the case. The rhythm and length of the lines is variable, though trochaic rhythms predominate:

Sáintē|Mári|é Vir|gīnē,
 Mōder|Jesu|Cristes|Naza|rene,
 On|fō schild|hēlp|thīn God|rīc
 On|fōng bring|hege|lich
 With|the in|Godes|richē.

But the notation makes a distinction between square notes (with or without tails) and diamond-shaped breves. Thus the scansion of:

Mári|é

is confirmed; as also that of

Mōder|Jésu|Cristes

and:

Gódes|richē.

In the third line, the second syllable of *Onfo* is probably a breve, so that we are justified in scanning:

On|fō, schild|hēlp . . .

while in the last line *the* is also a breve, and the line may run:

With the in|Gódes|richē

with a three-syllable foot at the beginning.*

* The Latin version, added to Royal MS. 5 F VII by a 14th cent. hand, is not a metrical version, and therefore gives no help towards a rhythmical interpretation. It reads:

Sancta maria uirgo
 mater ihesu christi nazareni
 suscipe tuere iuua (iuvā, adjuva) tuum godricum
 suscipe porta gloriose tecum in dei regnum.

The third song is more puzzling, both in the rhythm and the notation. The scansion is apparently :

Sain|té Ma|riē|Crístes|búr,
Máidenēs|clénhad|móderēs|flúr. . . .

The only definite indication given by the music is that the second syllable of *diliē* is short, while *maidenēs* and *moderēs* are no less definitely three syllables each, as Professor Saintsbury pointed out.

In the last, the song to St. Nicholas, the natural way to begin to read the lines would be :

Sáinte|Nícolaes|Gódes|drúd

and one editor even prints *Nícolaes* with a diphthong. But the music leaves no doubt whatever but that *Nícolaēs* is four syllables. The only other clear indications to be obtained from the notation are that the second syllables of *sconē*, *barē*, and the words *drud*, *hus*, and *wel* are all breves. Every line, in fact, ends in a breve, except the last.

The scansion of the verses then does not help us much (except in the first song) to interpret the rhythm of the music; nor does the music (except in one or two cases) help us to interpret the prosody. It is quite possible, of course, to work out 'mensural' interpretations and write out the music with bars; but probably no two interpretations would agree, and in any case the matter is far more complicated than that of the songs of the Troubadours and Trouvères or the Cántigas of King Alfonso the Sage. The reasons for the complication of these English songs are given with admirable clearness by Professor Saintsbury.*

Prosodically (he says) these have (1) the inherited license . . . of inserting 'unaccented' but not 'extra-metrical' syllables; (2) that . . . of composing a foot out of a single syllable with strong stress, stop, or catch of breath; (3) the substitution of trochee for iamb, with the possibility of anapæst—all these things being subject, though as yet 'confusedly,' to the general scheme of the metre, which . . . oscillates between that of

Pone luctum Magdalena,

and that of

Vexilla regis prodeunt.

The English verse of this period lacks the comparative regularity of the French, Provençal, or Galician-Portuguese, and therefore makes any application of the principle of the 'Rhythmic modes' extremely

* *A History of English Prosody* (1906). Vol. i, p. 31.

difficult and uncertain. Yet there was a model, conscious or unconscious, for the Middle English poets and song-writers—for the song-writers and unlettered men, like Godric, particularly, since they would be unlikely to have any great acquaintance with court-poetry in Norman French. That model was found in the Latin hymns, the rhymed and accented lines of which must always have been somewhere in their minds. Professor Saintsbury has suggested two of them; the editor of *The Cambridge Book of Prose and Verse* has gone further, and found something like a model in the rhythms and varying lengths of line in the hymns of St. Anselm (1033-1109) who died when St. Godric was about forty, and left a collection of verses known as *Hymni et Psalterium de Sancta Virgine Maria*.*

Regarded from another standpoint the songs of St. Godric show the transition taking place between the older, Anglo-Saxon alliterative poems and the more regular form of verse in which (following the example of French poetry and the Latin hymns) rhyme (or assonance) and metre began to be used. In one of Godric's songs, indeed, 'Saintē Mariē Cristes bur,' the third and fourth lines show an inner, double rhyme (*sinnē* and *winnē*) as well as a monosyllabic rhyme at the end of each pair of lines. Alliterative verse (as the editor of *The Cambridge Book of Prose and Verse* has well said) was originally 'a kind of chant,' the alliteration itself marking strong accents. 'Possibly the nearest parallel we have to it is the "pointing" of the psalms in the Church Service, that is, the fitting of lines with no fixed number of syllables to a fixed form of chant which has three accents in the first half and four accents in the second.' Alliterative English verse (which had two alliterative letters in the first half line and one alliterative letter in the second) is not so dead as is sometimes imagined. It is there as a pale but not entirely ineffectual ghost behind the greatest English poetry, and is especially effective (as translators have found) in words set to music. And even alliterative English verse can be made to live—as anyone can prove by reading a few lines from 'Piers Plowman' aloud, in a frankly modern manner. It does not sound in the least like Wagner.

' Consummatum est,' quoth Christ—and came for to swoon
Piteously and pale—as prisoner that dieth;
The Lord of life and of light—then laid his eyes together.
The day for dread thereof withdrew—and dark became the sun;
The wall of the temple to-clave—even in two pieces;

* *The Cambridge Book of Prose and Verse*. Edited by George Sampson. p. xxxi. The authorship of these hymns has, however, been questioned, and 'no solid ground exists for attributing to him [Anselm] these mediocre compositions.' F. J. E. Raby, *A Study of Christian Latin Poetry*. Oxford, 1927.

The hard rock all to-rove—and right dark night it seemed;
The earth quook and quashed—as [if] it quick were,
And dead men for that din—came out of deep graves,
And told why that tempest—so long time endured.

Piers Plowman, C. xxj, 58.

' Words set to music ' may be taken as an exact description of the process of composition—or revelation—experienced by St. Godric. His songs, like the tropes and sequences, seem rather a process of making music articulate by means of syllables than of making words memorable by means of music. Godric's music, if only we could feel it as he did and as his friends did, would mean more than the halting, stumbling words; for a musician might almost be defined as someone for whom the music is always more important than the words he puts to it. And even poets, from our own time right back to the time of St. Godric, have been people with ears to hear, to whom the sound is as a rule quite as important as the sense.

J. B. TREND.

ENGLISH FOLK-SONG

THE current popular definition of folk-song, of English folk-song, is simply 'old English song.' The words are right; folk-song is old, it may be English, and it certainly is song, but as a definition they are hopelessly wrong. Take up any volume of 'Fifty Old English Songs' and it's all Lombard Street to a china orange that there are not half-a-dozen folk-songs in the lot. 'Cold Blows the Wind' and 'Tom Bowling' are both old English songs, yet the first is a folk-song and the second is not. Wherein lies the difference? Not, as some would suggest at once, in the facts that the one is anonymous and of unknown age, while the other was written, words and music, by Charles Dibdin in the eighteenth century; nor yet in the facts that the one is as obviously the work of a rustic as the other is of a townsman. For, though in fact all English folk-songs are anonymous, such anonymity is only an accident; theoretically there could be a folk-song no older than last week, though for extrinsic reasons there have been no new ones in England for several generations, with the possible exception of 'Ma'm'selle of Armentières'; and although the great majority of English folk-songs are of peasant origin, this again is accidental: town and country have got nothing to do with it essentially. It seems then that the popular 'definition' is utterly inadequate.

For an expert definition we naturally consult Cecil Sharp who, whatever his merits as a musician, undoubtedly knew more about the facts of English folk-song than anybody else. He called it 'the song created by the common people.' Now we seem to be getting nearer to it; but the terms of the definition must themselves be defined. *Song* may be taken in its dictionary meaning of any sort of singing, vocal music (e.g., it includes hymns, which in their folk forms are usually called carols). *Created*=brought into existence, originated, invented; but *not* written down in words and symbols and staves, or otherwise composed in the modern sense. By the *common people* is meant those whose intellectual development and spiritual state is due solely to tradition, environment, communal association and direct contact with life; who have not been subjected to any formal or official system of training, schooling or education, and have had no close contact with sophisticated or educated persons. Such people, of whom there are very few in England to-day, may be called non-educated or unlettered, and must be carefully distinguished from the uneducated,

who now form the bulk of our population; these have had schooling, but are still substantially illiterate.

Sharp's definition is not exhausted until the meaning of 'created by the common people' has been considered; this I will for the moment delay, while I advert to an implication of what has been already said.

In most of Western Europe, and particularly in England and the United States, the writer of verse, the composer of music, the singer (to say nothing of the painter and the stone-carver) are exceptional persons; they nearly always spring from, and invariably form, a cultured and superior class, with sundry advantages over the vulgar herd, of education, taste, opportunity and knowledge; they are looked upon with superstitious reverence by the *bourgeoisie*, mocked by the beefy objectivists, and patronised by the *cognoscenti*; they form a class and a caste, as definite and exclusive as that of the lawyers, the physicians and the military; their philosophy and work are extravagantly individual and idiosyncratic; in a word, they form that class which (like other classes) has grown up and developed since the Renaissance, and arrogates to its members the name of artist. Now folk-song is communal, not individual. It is (in those places where it still lives) made and sung by all, or any, of the people at large. The making and singing of songs was, and is, not a learned profession or occupation, but something which anybody may do. The notably skilled maker or singer receives honour, but not more than, nor different from, that which is given to any other good workman, such as the smith whose door-hinges are famous or the shepherd who has unusual knowledge of how to deal with scab. Folk-music is an art or trade* like any other, but one that is not normally pursued for profit and which is open to all without apprenticeship.

It seems then that an antithesis may legitimately be made between folk-music and art-music, and it is indeed often made. The sentimentalist may object that folk-music is an art, and as good as and better than much art-music; so it is. But the jargon and 'tushery' of the critic and the antics and posturings of the practitioner have been such for a hundred years as to make the word 'art' one which may well be set over against the simplicity, sincerity and tradesmanship of the products of the common people or folk.

Just as Professor Child, who will probably remain the ultimate authority on them, refused to commit himself to any theory as to the origins of the ballads, so Cecil Sharp ventured no hypothesis on those of folk-song, beyond their obvious peasant ancestry. Other learned and industrious dons were less reticent. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch

* In its primary sense of 'skilled work.'

and Professor Kittredge hardly went beyond postulating the folk origin of the ballads, many of which were sung to tunes which survive; but Professor Gummere in his *Beginnings of Poetry* made great play with speculations about *ballare*, *ballata*, *balet*, *ballad*; and Professor Louise Pound contradicted them all and claimed a literary or consciously artistic genesis for them. Leave the surgeons to their dry bones. Of this much we may be certain, that the folk-songs which we still have originated among the peasants; a man has no need to be a professor or even *Baccalaureus Artium* to know that. Read them, hear them sung, better still, sing them yourself, and you will know without possibility of gainsaying; the songs tell their own tale, in more senses than the obvious one.

Now Adam was a plowman when plowing first begun;
The next that did succeed him was Cain his eldest son.
Since then their generation this calling doth pursue;
That bread may not be wanting, remains the painful plow

In six months' time this fair maid died,
Let this be put on my tombstone, she cried:
Here lies a poor distressed maid;
Just in her bloom she was snatched away,
Her clothing made of the cold earthen clay.

One Sunday morn, as I've heard say,
Young Richard mounted his Dobbin Gray,
And over the hills he rode amain,
A-courting the parson's daughter, Jane.
(With my dumbledown, dollykin, dumbledownday.)

In these three verses, taken at random, can be heard, through the modifications and alterations of generations of singers, the authentic voice of the all but extinct English peasant. Andrew Lang put it comprehensively, if somewhat high-falutin'ly. 'Folk songs spring from the very heart of the people, and flit from age to age, from lip to lip of shepherds, peasants, nurses, of all that continue nearest to the natural state of man. . . . The whole soul of the peasant class breathes in their burdens, as the great sea resounds in the shells cast up from its shores.' These songs bring even the stranger face to face with the common people of England, that is, with the real England as distinct from the England of history text-books or imperialist newspapers, the country of Alfred, of Becket, of William Langland, of Thomas More, of Southwell, of Fielding, of Cobbett; these same common people were ill-treated, then neglected and finally exploited, first by their rulers, then by their masters, and if they no longer sing their own songs of Zion, it is their own fault.

One other thing, and that negative, may be known certainly of folk-song origins. They were communal, the fruit of a *commercium mentis et rerum*, but the community invented neither the words nor the tunes. The vision of a group of 'jolly fellows on the ale-house bench' solemnly setting themselves to compose together a song with its air is an astonishing and ludicrous one. It is no less astonishing that anyone who has ever talked with a group of individuals, and knows how poetry and music are ordinarily made, should have sponsored such an idea. Yet this 'throng-inspiration' and communal composition stunt has had its supporters, among them Professor Gummere. Of course, every song, words or music, had its now unknown individual originator. And the first thing the community did was to remember both, and then to select from individual variants.

A folk-song (or dance) is at any given moment the result of continuous growth and in its natural and proper form is based upon and evolved through oral tradition alone. The conservatism of the common people protects it from the corruption of mere fashion, but does not preclude modification; individuals introduce changes which may remain local or may become co-extensive with the area of distribution of the song. In this way folk-song is an art, not of individuals, but of a whole community, an expression of common ideas and impulses.

As a song became popular and distributed over a wider area, different variants were adopted by different communities; as a song got older, it became altered, in different ways in different places, by faulty transmission, misunderstanding* or deliberate changes in words or tune. It was still organically the same song, or it may be regarded as a *stirps*, with descendants. This is one reason why it is impossible to date almost any folk-song, from internal evidence (and there is practically no other); a reference, *e.g.*, to Oliver Cromwell, in the text is not the slightest evidence that it originated in the seventeenth century: it may have been in circulation for two hundred years or more before it picked up the Lord Protector's name. And there are plenty of songs certainly dating from before the Reformation which have been altered by Protestant singers. For example, in the last line of the third verse of 'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.'

Thursday morn, Saint Peter wrote
Joy to the soul that heaven hath bote.
Friday, Christ died on the tree
To save other men as well as me.
Saturday, the evening dead.
Sunday morn, the Book's outspread.

* *e.g.*, Baring-Gould heard the words 'German Elector' sung as 'German lecturers'!

No folk-song is completed until it is in print, and not even then if it continues to be sung traditionally, without reference to the printed book. And, while it would be an exaggeration to say that there are no such things as 'corrupt texts,' even minor variants are, strictly speaking, each a separate and distinct song. Major variants are clearly such, and a very good example is 'The moon shines bright.' This is a Mayday carol, formerly sung in Hertfordshire, Essex, Sussex, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Devon and Cornwall, and given by Sandys in his Collection, where it has two verses which also appear in Fr. Anderton's 'Jerusalem my Happy Home,' as a *Christmas* carol. All the sets of words bear some relation to one another, as do many of the tunes, but the Sandys version is entirely different, and in Northamptonshire it was sung to part of the air of 'Brighton Camp' (i.e., 'The Girl I Left Behind Me'). At least four of these versions can be called distinct and separate songs, and within the last few weeks I have picked up another ('very debased') variant from a girl in a Berkshire village.

A better known example is 'The Outlandish Knight,' a ballad found all over northern Europe. It is variously called 'The Bloody Knight,' 'False Sir John,' 'The False Priest,' 'False Mass John,' in the Isle of Man 'Illiam Boght' (Worthless William), etc., and may be found in Child's collection under the heading of 'Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight.' The knight (in some versions a priest) carries off a girl and tries to drown her; she, stripped to her 'holland smock,' induces him to turn round on the plea that 'it is not meet that a ruffian should a naked woman see,' and thereupon 'She caught him round the middle so neat, and tumbled him into the sea.' The peasant origin of such a song is clear both from the appeal to decency and in the discomfiture of the gentry (or clergy).*

Particularly in the eighteenth century, songs local to one part were spread about the country by means of broadsheets (or broadsides), which were published by such as Catnach, Disley, Jackson of Birmingham and Harkness of Preston and sold by pedlars with their other wares. Even to-day very old singers may be met with who say that a certain song was 'got off a ballet' (i.e., ballad-sheet). This accounts for much eighteenth century allusion, for an occasional flavour of gentility and elegance, and also for such performances as the singing of Hood 'Faithless Sally Brown' to a tune of 'The Seven Joys of Mary.'

The outlook of the common people is neither wide nor narrow. It is concerned with such matters as birth, love, pride, scorn, work,

* No unfavourable conclusion can validly be drawn as to the attitude of the mediæval peasant to his religion from the fact that a priest is made the villain of such a story. They were 'realists' in a way that we are not.

death, but it is concerned with them personally, objectively, without philosophising. So in the songs, these are their themes, and they are treated without literary or other artifice, tersely, with absolute sincerity; there is sentiment, but not sentimentality, and no whining—the peasant is a thrice-dipped fatalist, that is, translated into Christian terms, resigned to the will of God. So he fears neither life, love nor death.

Abstractions are beyond him; there is no such thing as a folk-song about patriotism. Nor are the lately popular domestic themes used, for they can hardly avoid that sentimentalism which, because unreal, left the true peasant cold. Convivial songs there are, but not of the strictly drinking and sporting type—those were the affair of the yeomen and gentry. Humour is by no means lacking, but there are no comic songs—the peasant would not, could not, burlesque himself; their place was taken by the ever popular 'cumulative songs,' such as 'The Dilly Song' and 'The Tree in the Valley.' Work, often treated playfully and affectionately, is a recurrent subject, but human love has inspired the majority.

There is a fair number of religious songs, which may be distinguished as 'carols,' though this word is, quite unnecessarily, usually confined to Christmas ones. The contrast between the vernacular hymns of our ancestors—such as 'A virgin unspotted,' 'The ten joys of Mary,' 'The Coventry Carol,' 'Down beneath the leaves of lime,' 'Let all that are to mirth inclined,' 'Blessed be that Maid Marie'—and those we sing (or do not sing) to-day is simply too painful. We have nothing like to:—

Joseph being an aged man truly
He married a maiden fair and free;
A purer virgin could no man see
Than he chose for his wife and dearest dear.

or to:—

I saw a maiden sit and sing,
She lulled a little child, a sweet lording:
Lullay, mine Liking, my dear Son, mine Sweeting,
Lullay, my dear Heart, mine own dear Darling.

or to:—

God's son is born, his mother is a maid
Both after and before, as the prophecy said,
With ay;
A wonder-thing it is to see,
How maiden and mother one may be;
Was there never none but she,
Maid mother Mary.

or, yet again, to:—

You pious Christians who do now draw near
With recreated hearts to shed a tear,
Your Lord behold with great humility
Sentenced to die upon Mount Calvary.

Just as its subjects were primary and elemental, so folk-poetry dealt with them in an elemental way; if it is homely and simple and straightforward, that is because those were the characteristics of the minds that made it. There is some very poor folk-poetry, but the general level was high; the rare 'purple patch' is generally an indication of later doctoring. Fire and grass and stones and water and weather and animals, such were the bricks the folk built with, not merely because they were familiar, but because the mental habit of the common people was (and is) to deal in actualities, and to deal with them realistically. In 'The Unquiet Grave':—

My lips are cold as clay, sweetheart,
My breath smells earthy and strong. . . .

Just so spoke the sister of Lazarus to Jesus: 'Lord by this time he stinketh.'

Coming to folk-song for the first time, there is at once noticed the absence of that prudery which a more refined, but certainly not more chaste, age has camouflaged under such high-sounding names as reticence or delicacy. D'Urfey's 'Pills to Purge Melancholy' (which contains many folk-songs) is now kept under lock and key, yet the respectable Mr. Addison recommended this medicine to cheer the young ladies of his day (*The Guardian*, 1713, No. 67). Incest is almost a common subject in the ballads (e.g., 'Sheath and Knife'); it is treated simply, neither with abhorrence nor approval, but rather with pity, and death invariably overtakes the sinners. This is characteristic. The love songs are free, but as a rule moral; single wantonness may be forgiven, but retribution always overtakes adultery. The 'way of a man with a maid' apparently was, and is, less mysterious to peasants than to kings.

It is impossible to give a typical folk-song from among so many sorts, but the following verses from the Hertfordshire Mayday carol (see above) are characteristic of a common type.

The moon shines bright, the stars give a light,
A little before 'tis day;
Our heavenly Father he called to us
And bid us to wake and pray.

Awake, awake, oh, pretty, pretty maid,
 Out of your drowsy dream,
 And step into your dairy below
 And fetch me a bowl of cream;

If not a bowl of your sweet cream
 A mug of your brown beer,
 For the Lord knows where we shall meet again
 To be maying another year.

So dear, so dear Christ loved us,
 And for our sins was slain,
 He bids us to leave off our wicked, wicked ways
 And turn to our sweet God again.

A branch of may have I brought you
 And at your door it stands;
 It is but a sprout but well budded out
 By the work of our Lord's hand. *et reliqua.*

Now just consider that. All the 'good things' of this world: love of man and woman, work (represented by the dairy), good fellowship (represented by the beer), the material world itself (represented by the hawthorn), all mixed up with God and our duty to Him. That song, with its simple, clean tune, represents a great tradition. No one but a Christian, a good, solid, traditional Catholic Christian, could have invented it.

Some people who cannot appreciate the directness and simplicity of folk poetry have their understanding reached by the music. The tunes of folk-songs, modal for the most part (and therefore at least as old as James I), are as various and subject to the same influences as the words. Technical consideration of them, besides requiring pages of illustration, is beyond the knowledge of the present writer; but I may properly remark that folk-music is 'unconscious art spontaneously produced,' and is for that very reason essentially good music. Until people have tasted of the tree of good and evil (*i.e.*, technical training, cultured upbringing, etc.), though they may not produce the most superb art, they cannot produce really bad. Moreover, folk-music is scientific; that is to say, it is constructed on clear, intelligible principles. Just as speech and language came before and made grammar, so there was music before anyone had worked out the intricacies of harmony and counterpoint. The elementary significance of the tunes being modal is that the music is essentially 'voice music,' whereas all 'civilised' music to-day is instrument ridden; we cannot

think outside the two tonic scales, major and minor. Folk-music was disciplined. The folk 'composer' had his twelve modes within which to work; and it is to the variety thus at his disposal, and not to any attempt on his part to make tunes of an 'original' or idiosyncratic sort, that are due the peculiarities, such as the absence of a leading note, so noticeable to our ears.

The influence of folk-song on 'polite' music has not yet been properly explored, but through the ballad-operas of the eighteenth century it has been considerable. For example, many of the song tunes in 'The Beggar's Opera' are adapted from folk-music. It is an amusing thought that the originals of those much sung and praised airs should have been made by 'the rude and barbarous peasantry of a rural England'! Some of the folk-tunes, in their turn, were based on other, often ecclesiastical, music; there is a west country Spring song, for instance, of which the tune is a variation of the Easter hymn *O filii et filiae*.

The characteristics of English folk-singing were absence of expression (but not of feeling), no slurring of intervals, and sharp, clear enunciation, which was helped by the norm of the music being one note to one syllable. There was moreover a convention, still occasionally met with, that the songs should be sung standing, head thrown back, eyes closed, rather slowly, in very even time, and entirely without gesture. Simple, natural singing is required for folk-song; laboured voice production and concert hall tricks ruin it completely. Old singers have been met with who sang folk-songs well in the traditional way, but upon singing a modern popular song at once began to mouth their words, slur their intervals, groan their final consonants—tricks they had learnt from the church choir or the school-teacher.

All old folk-singers agree that up to about 1840 everyone in the country parts of England could and did sing the old songs, in the traditional way. It is not clear why that particular date should mark a break. For a hundred and fifty years Puritanism did its worst, apparently with not much success where songs were concerned, and perhaps the first serious blow came from John Wesley, when he 'converted' half England (which badly needed it) and popularised evangelical hymns. The 'industrial revolution' followed, continuing to depopulate the rural districts up to our own day; side by side with it went the 'agrarian revolution,' which did away with peasant status by enclosing the common lands, and disposed of the yeoman by buying him out. Folk-song lived on among what was left of the 'peasantry,' but about a hundred years ago the farmers began to give up their 'harvest-homes,' shearing suppers, rent dinners, and other occasions when landlords, tenants and labourers met together to eat, drink and

sing; they are quite gone now, and with them the last real stronghold of folk-song. Then came compulsory schooling, in 1870, and the particular brand of teacher and curriculum inflicted upon the country children of England is one in face of which no moribund art or traditional culture can recover or survive.*

Much blame has been laid upon the piano, the gramophone and the radio. Unjustly. They are bad enough in all conscience, but folk-singing was to all intents and purposes dead before any one of them had penetrated from the suburbs of big towns to the last haunts of English traditional music. It has been their job to assist disintegration and to heap corruption upon it. A few genuine folk-singers remain; they are 'the last lingering remnant of the old village life, when it had a more or less independent existence, built its own church, hanged its rogues, made its own boots, shirts and wedding-rings, and chanted its own tunes. All the rest is gone. We cannot call our souls our own now. We create nothing.' A few more generations of such progress and the fields, already songless, will have lost even their present few workers.

The fact that a very large number of English folk-songs, words and tunes, are now recorded in print is due to the labours during the past fifty years of such as Cecil Sharp, Baring-Gould, Frank Kidson, Fuller Maitland, Charles Marson, Lucy Broadwood. These and their fellows saw the likelihood of complete disappearance and so scoured the country, noting down words and tunes from the mouths of traditional singers with all possible care and accuracy. The result is a *Corpus Poeticum Villanum*, to which there is still uncollected material to be added.

This body of song has provided an exercise ground for the social historian, the literary and musical critic, and others. It has also been pounced on by 'welfare workers,' who have sought to engineer a revival in folk-singing. Of course they fail. The more people who sing folk-songs, because they like them, the better; but school-children singing them with a conductor in Hyde Park, or young women singing them in a village institute, or I singing them in my kitchen, is not folk-singing. If there is ever genuine folk-music in England again, it will start and gradually develop among the common people; and of that there is not the faintest chance while our present industrial and urban civilisation remains.

'Studies serve for delight.' So does singing. And the only ultimate justification for digging out and using folk-songs is if we really appreciate them and really enjoy them, without patronage or

* The survival of a living tradition of folk-singing in a district of the U.S.A. requires separate treatment. See *Folk Songs of English Origin collected in the Appalachian Mountains*. By Cecil Sharp. (Novello.)

pose or artistic chatter. And as long as there are any people who so sing them, 'for delight,' making melody not only in their hearts but also with their own voices, so long will there be a standing protest against manufactured music. Folk-song was made for everybody, and anybody, gentle or simple, rich or poor, educated or schooled or neither, can enjoy it and sing it. 'It cannot be put on a mechanical instrument. Its special qualities—directness, intimacy, economy, its rejection of intellectual subtlety—are just those which are not suited to the gramophone.' In the concert room it is an utter failure, and must be so from its very nature. Its place is the home—I would add the public-house, but singing is now discouraged in public-houses. And its worst enemy is the cultured person who calls it 'quaint and picturesque.'

DONALD ATTWATER.

COMMON SENSE AT THE KEYBOARD

IN his recently published work on the science of pianoforte technique, Mr. Thomas Fielden* has made a contribution to the art which has long been awaited. The time is ripe for such a work and its teaching is bound to react on the current trend and character of pianoforte playing.

This will result not so much from his penetrating analysis of the act of touch as by his common-sense conclusion, which is, that principles of arm weight, rotation and relaxation do not, of themselves, solve the pianist's problem. The student who would become the complete pianist has to get back to finger drill with the proviso that that essential gymnastic is based on rational principles. That science should now attest this fact is gratifying to those who have throughout upheld such beliefs. It is some years since I challenged the teaching of the new relaxation schools and pointed to the invertebrate character of the technique founded on these principles. Mr. Fielden's analysis leads to similar conclusions, and even in his analysis he employs identical evidences. The fallacy of the arm weight relaxation theory lies in the fact that a loose arm implies a loose finger, and since a loose finger is obviously incapable of supporting the weight of the arm the theory is untenable. Mr. Fielden recognises that a certain fixation is necessary to the act of touch, and further admits the principle of the 'follow through' as essential to the correct timing of the blow (which was my own contention in *The Artist at the Piano*, 1909). This principle he interprets as a natural process towards a state of relaxation, a condition, however, which is never wholly achieved in the act of playing. This leads to the theory of continuity and real duration which is of intriguing interest applied to the playing of an instrument whose limitations would appear to deny its application. While admitting this principle Mr. Fielden unfortunately does not attempt to state a rationale.

On the question of the current rotary theory he shows that forearm rotation, applied to finger groups, scales and arpeggios 'is a mistake and subversive of good technique,' and where applied to five finger exercises 'it is unscientific, indeed anything more mistaken than this it is difficult to imagine.'

Pachman, we may add, has been equally emphatic on this point,

* *The Science of Pianoforte Technique*, by Thomas Fielden. Macmillan. 8s. 6d. net.

while Leschetizky may be said to have embodied the true principle of forearm swing which Mr. Fielden advocates as distinct from *Seitengelenk* or forearm rotation in his famous dictum 'gehen Sie mit.' One principle does not rule out the other; there is a time for the employment of each and the secret of success lies in discovering the movements which yield the greatest economy of effort in relation to the effect attained. Technical aptitude differs extraordinarily among pianists, but the mistake has been made of ascribing facility to the principles of relaxation, possibly on account of the ease which characterises successful work. It would be more scientific to explain such facility as the economic employment of energy.

The right use of strength is quite obviously the cause of ease and freedom on the part of the player. Studies in relaxation may often be necessary to repair faults, but they can never equip the pianist with the individual finger strength requisite for the immense difficulties encountered in the acquisition of a modern repertory.

Undoubtedly the aim of the many authors of technical studies is to prepare to this end; but practice is not enough, consistent and intelligent application is necessary, which responsibility must always be shared by the teacher and pupil. It is well to point this distinction between method and application, it explains why most methods have their failures as well as successes. It should not be impossible to devise a finger gymnastic at the piano equivalent in its purpose and effect to the gymnastic which dancers find necessary to maintain their technical standards.

Mr. Fielden has attempted this solution to the problem, and although he has carried investigation further than his predecessors it is doubtful whether the method of probing the pianist's secret in the complexities of the physiological mechanism of touch serves a practical purpose. The enquiry which has caused him to analyse the movements of every sinew and muscle, and their infinite interaction which even the simplest act of touch involves, has failed to lead him to the secrets of touch which the piano itself discloses. In effect this method is equivalent to putting the cart before the horse. In practice it will generally be found more effectual to know what to aim at than to be made conscious of the way of doing it. For this reason it is of the utmost importance for the pianist to study and understand his instrument, to know how to do the right thing with key and hammer, just as in cricket to do the right thing with bat and ball implies the correct action of the body. To become one with his instrument the pianist must be trained in the knowledge of its principle of touch. It is the only way by which the essential synchronisation of the aural and touch senses can be acquired. Without that knowledge technique and tone will not be in perfect accord, and to the extent of that disparity effects will

be marred. A physiological basis of technique which is related only to key pressures regardless of the manner of touch is therefore in itself inadequate. Modern pedagogy is undoubtedly indebted to Mr. Matthay for his insistence on this most important truth.

Mr. Fielden states that we have lost ground in the standards of modern attainment when compared with that of the past; at the same time he claims that an enormous advance has been made during the last twenty-five years, due to the application of scientific principles in pianoforte pedagogy. This will seem incomprehensible to many readers. It is probably nearer to facts to recognise in the highest technical standards of to-day, as exemplified in the playing of such artists as Hofmann, Backhaus and Friedmann, a keyboard mastery which, if equalled, has never been excelled; and also that this perfection has been achieved with little or no knowledge of the new scientific analysis of touch. Progress in the theory of technique must not therefore be confused with that achieved in the practised art. Theorists in their enthusiasm for science, naturally stress the importance of the sources of their knowledge. At the same time it would not seem that they have learnt anything new by this method, it has merely supplied anatomical proof of the correctness of principles long recognised and acquired in practice.

It is fortunately much easier to demonstrate an action than to explain how it is done in physiological terms, and the teacher, who can demonstrate and who possesses the imaginative gifts for imparting his knowledge to others, is fully equipped for his work. This is no plea for discarding theoretic science, but only for placing such knowledge in its right perspective. Every pianist must be aware of the inadequacy of this knowledge when he turns from text books to the actual experience of playing. Leschetizky discredited every attempt to translate the language of touch into the printed word, and it must be confessed that the most subtle analysis yet given of the act of touch leaves us in no doubt as to the elusive nature of the innermost secrets of the pianist's art.

As Mr. Fielden himself admits, the psychology of technique has still to be written before analysis may be said to be complete. Quite obviously any analysis which eliminates intention, is merely dealing with the etymology of sounds, notes, and not music, the origin of the impulse of musical touch, movement and gesture, are too deeply hidden to be probed by the external evidences of an isolated act of touch. It has been only too readily assumed that touch was a matter of merely levering arm weight against the resistance of the key. Mr. Fielden comes nearer to the truth when he discovers that analysis has to consider how much the body itself counts for in the act of playing—it needs no profound knowledge of psycho-physiological laws to

be aware of this fact and to what degree of concentration we put ourselves literally into every act we perform. Such concentration does not impair technical freedom, but, on the other hand, it does not admit the looseness of arm and finger which phlegmatic strumming induces. Hitherto analysis of the physiological mechanism of touch has ignored the causes of this vital distinction; and it would seem that many books have yet to be written before the technique of such masters as Paderewski and Cortot is explained, or for that matter of the veriest tyro whose touch is musically inspired. This knowledge is lived in the art of the sensitive performers, and experience which distinguishes the playing of the true interpreter from that of the mere performer. The difference is not a degree of technical excellence or refinement of touch but of quality. One is pure mechanics, the other is vitalised by a creative force. It is this factor which has hitherto escaped the closest investigation into the cause and effect of musical inspiration in pianoforte playing.

In common with the pioneers of the scientific schools Mr. Fielden is an inveterate optimist. He claims that scientific knowledge has now developed to the point where there can be no room for any particular method, and that the time has now come for technique to be regarded as a science. Already there exist many varieties of scientific schools, and the controversies between them are no less keen than existed formerly between the various empirical schools.

It will be nearer the truth to say that within the scope of science there is room for the interplay of all varieties of individual temperament and taste, and also for the evolutionary processes which mark the changes of fashion. It would not be difficult to prove that the changes of the last twenty-five years in the trend of the schools are more related to these causes than to scientific teaching. The virile Teutonic schools in the latter half of the nineteenth century carried their belief in the pianist's strong hand too far, with the result we have witnessed of the supersession of the old giants of the 'grand style' by the more subtle and sensitive piano genius of the type of Cortot and Gieseking. Each age creates its own values, and pedagogues, whether empirical or scientific, will seek to interpret the spirit of their own time; let us hope that they will continue to invent as many methods as there are legitimate styles of performance.

In one important particular Mr. Fielden is behind the times in his unscientific predilection for speaking of pianoforte tone quality as though it were within the control of touch and not linked up inseparably with that of tone intensity. Mr. Ortmann has destroyed this illusion once and for all in his work *Pianoforte Tone and Touch*, but the old belief still lingers even in the minds of professed scientists.

Little good comes of clinging to illusions and much technical harm has resulted in the past from the teaching of methods which attempted to produce a quality of tone which it is not in the instrument to give. Science teaches the pianist a practical lesson here, which is, to get to work in the direction where musical imagination makes legitimate demands on technique, in the infinite resources of effects which are attainable in the art of blending tones and in the control of the rhythmic line. The tone of a single note is the criterion by which we judge the piano, a progression gives the first evidence of the quality of the player.

I began this article in praise of Mr. Fielden's book; if my own point of view makes me sceptical towards introspective methods, this does not depreciate the value of his remarkable work. He has proved conclusively the fallacies of many theories hitherto held to be scientific and he has explored much new ground. If he has failed in his analysis to probe the innermost secret of the art and reduce it to a science, he has failed where no other has yet succeeded. Moreover, although the nature of his investigation has caused him to write in terms which will not be easily understood by the average piano student, to many he has made of the dry facts of technique an interesting and entertaining study, unmarred by the too didactic manner of those who read in analysis the final word.

GEORGE WOODHOUSE.

CONCENTRATION AND PIANOFORTE TECHNIQUE

If, instead of 'technique,' Von Bülow had called the first essential in playing the pianoforte concentration, the second concentration, and the third concentration; had he qualified that by saying that the first essential was a concentration which kept the mind clear from all outside thought interference; that the second was a concentration which judged nothing but accuracy of notation and phrasing; that the third was a concentration which judged nothing but tone and tonal effects; that the whole concentration gradually turned itself into a force which so controlled the brain that the performer became utterly oblivious to everything except the story he was telling to his hearers—then he might indeed have defined perfection in pianism.

It is under these three headings that it is proposed in this article to consider the subject of concentration in relation to pianoforte technique. The first of them, that of the form of concentration which expels all outside thoughts, is one from the lack of which, one imagines, a good many of us have suffered as boys. Our Latin verbs and Greek paradigms simply had to be known by the morrow. The fact that we knew that the knowledge would be required later in the term when the examinations came on did not weigh with us at all. All that mattered then was 'to-morrow.' If anyone had told us to memorise the scores of the first eleven we should have laughed him to scorn. But it might not have occurred to us that *interest* played the greatest part in the memorising of those figures, and that, for them, we used the brain's natural methods of absorption.

Concentration is a faculty—or, at least, if it is not actually a faculty it works very much like one when properly handled. And in the handling of it there is art and a reward. But the forcible methods of our school days, though they were often, in our judgment at the time, the line of least resistance, are those which in reality oppose the natural workings of the intellect. This is easily proved. The priest who says Mass from memory with ease and expression combined, the organist who plays the whole 150 psalms without the slightest need for reference to a psalter, the conductor who has no need to look at a score of a Beethoven symphony while directing its performance—such as these will tell you that they have never sat down and 'swatted' these things: it has been a matter of absorption. It so happens (by a whim of convention and custom) that whereas the priest may have the ser-

vice book in his hand if he wishes, the organist may use a psalter without anyone objecting, the conductor may refer to the score without loss of dignity or prestige, yet the pianist must play without his copy before him. There is no occasion to complain of this. One has only to see the change of effect when a pianist uses a score, as some do in the case of a concerto. The present writer happened recently to give a recital with a pupil. He tried the experiment of playing from memory her accompaniments as well as his own part of the programme, which consisted of twelve of the Chopin études; that experiment has become his permanent practice simply because of the unity of thought which the absence of printed or written matter, between him and the singer, brought about. The songs became not so much melodies for the singer and harmonies for the accompanist as compositions for two instruments, a pianoforte and a mezzo-soprano voice. And as the whole question of success in public pianoforte playing lies primarily in an infallible memory, the subject of concentration is here treated with that end strictly in view.

The first form has been already named—the expulsion of outside thoughts during practice. It will be agreed by those who have done much playing, especially in public, that the initial stages are fairly plain sailing; the work has to be read (which in itself is sufficiently absorbing to keep the attention active and alive), and other matters of interest, such as phrasing and fingering, have to be attended to in a suitable manner. The time comes, however, when the player has reached the stage of being able to play the work with more or less technical comfort so long as the copy is still before him, and so long as not too great a speed is indulged in. It is at this stage that one is so likely to waste valuable time. If those who read these words will recall their own experiences in this matter they will remember how that progress seemed to slow down, and how they came to the stage of playing the work through—possibly quite creditably—but with no appreciable progress towards getting it ‘by heart.’ We know so well—do we not?—that it is possible to get any work up to this point and to keep it there for years. We can go back to it (after not having played it to anyone for a long time) and find it still the same. *We can still play it.* But without the copy it is a very different matter. A personal experience will make this point clearer.

Some few years ago I chanced to give at short notice a pianoforte recital containing twenty pieces, and found that my concentrative powers were much lower than I had thought them to be. After I had reached the stage I have just discussed I found that time had passed and that I had not gone much further towards the desired goal of playing them easily without the score. Upon

investigating the cause of this I had to admit to myself that, as I played, my thoughts constantly wandered to other matters connected with my professional life. A letter to be answered would cause annoyance; I found myself thinking out (in a rather desultory way) the kind of reply which should be given. On one occasion I rose from the instrument and actually wrote the answer. The effect was less happy than I could have wished. I found other thoughts interfering, or else these now stale ones recurring. A further examination upon psychological lines proved to me that I was not giving my brain enough work to do. I slowed down the pace of the work and closed the book. It was not long before I came to the first stop. But instead of opening the copy and finding the place I went back to a previous passage which had caused me no difficulty, and made a further attempt, but with the same result. I then busied myself with reproducing the counterpoints mentally, in other words by picturing the score, at a very slow pace, almost threatening myself with the imposition of writing out the passage from memory rather than refer to the copy. The result was a good twenty minutes at the whole passage and an easy performance of it at the end of that time. Concentration over this piece of rehearsal was an easy matter, because I was not less irritated than determined, and I soon forgot about the letter and the other outside thoughts which had caused me the annoyance.

Nothing more and nothing less was thus proved than the well-known psychological fact that the brain must be fully occupied, and therefore must be in a state of contentment, before perfect action can be expected of it. To compare that method with the school-day system of 'hard repetition' is to show the brain contented in the one case and in a state of distress in the other. Naturally it comes about, later, that the stage is reached when it is an easy matter to play the work from memory so long as there are no disturbing influences. But when we consider that all public work is disturbing and that, even after years of it, 'nerves' will assert themselves, we have to devise some form of case-hardening. The best psychological method is to play through the work, or rather to feel one's way through it, and read something aloud the while, thus forcing the brain for a few moments to carry two distinct lines of thought at one and the same time. It will be found that the relief when only one type of thought is used will be considerable, and that the work of playing from memory will appear an easy matter. It needs doing a very few times in order to 'twist' the brain into vivid action. What this does is to ensure that the player is not merely just 'up to' his work by the time he comes to perform it in public, but well 'over' it. Another form of the same thought is to play a rapid étude of Chopin, for example, much faster than it is required to be played. The mental relief at slowing down to the

proper (yet rapid) speed brings about a great safety. And, above all, the mind is contentedly active the while.

The second heading under which I have treated concentration—that of judging the notation—is one which, naturally, has to be worked side by side with that which I have just discussed. There is everything to be said for reading slowly through the work once or twice before any serious practice begins, simply upon the ground that familiarity with the general outline of it is desirable. But it is very much better to hear the work played by someone else. To listen to a work by wireless or by gramophone with a copy before us gives our intellects a chance of absorbing quietly, without being in any way distressed by having to pay attention to the actual physical movements which mere striking of notes demands. The question of reading at sight is scarcely entered into here at all. It is manifestly an advantage to be able to read easily and well, just as it is desirable that we should understand counterpoint. But some of the greatest pianists have been notably bad readers and not very sure of contrapuntal rules. Which-ever way it happens to be in our case, there is every argument for beginning at the earliest moment the work of committing to memory. It is not helping the brain to 'try the work over,' correcting what mistakes we can as we go along. One can spend years at that sort of thing and be little the wiser for it. And this is where we seem to have to concentrate in order to fight our very human nature. The least giving way in the matter and we find ourselves wandering on down to the bottom of the page with the second phrase still unmastered. If we care to rouse ourselves sufficiently we can insist that each phrase is played slowly and correctly, and that each passage is 'felt through' without the guidance of the printed music. The consequence is that we interest ourselves to such an extent that an hour is gone with our concentrative power having been at its best the whole time. It is worth it because so much time is saved in the end. Personally I divide up all works with which I am conversant into two sections: those that I play pianistically, that is, from memory and with such perfection as my present state of pianism admits of, and those that I can play with the copy only. Such works as the violin sonatas of Beethoven are mostly in the latter class. There they will remain until opportunity arises for one or more of them to be promoted to the first class. Although I am likely to broadcast one of them with a violinist at any time, and though I am not likely to do anything particularly idiotic while performing them in the London Studio, I know that each time I have entered that studio with a work in this second class I have wished it were in the first. There is nothing to be said for leaving any great work in that condition. The printed score should be a necessity first, and a real nuisance last. If we realised

that the concentration spent in committing work after work to memory, by never allowing a single passage to pass us until it is well in the memory, is worth untold gold to us intellectually, we should leave no stone unturned until such a desirable state had been reached. To play from memory is never to have done anything else, never to have allowed a phrase to be left *until it is known*.

The third section of this survey of the act of concentration is perhaps the most important: it is that which judges tone. The method has always appealed to me as being almost identical with the action of the brain when one of those electric news-signs in the streets is being read. From right to left appear words careering along after each other in procession. Each word passes us by, leaving an impression. Let us examine that statement. Words are made up of hieroglyphics called letters. This means that, as we read from left to right, familiar sounds strike our inner and mental ear. That fact can be proved thus. A Southerner hears, for instance, that someone *dahnced* on the *grahss*; but his Northern brother hears something quite different in terms of sound, though the meaning may be the same. His system of phonetics tells him that they *dannced* on the *grasss*. Words, then, are sounds which written signs strike for us. What are musical sounds? The question needs no answer. Using the simile of the electric sign we find it necessary to adjust ourselves so that we judge each sound as it passes our mental ear and mental vision with a perfect sense of proportion. Tone in pianoforte-playing, after all, is that by which we are judged. We all know that unless we strike perfectly we get nothing worth having in the way of result.

Chopin's own method was simplicity itself. With him there were no lateral movements, much less rotary; the wrists were slightly depressed; the whole of the action came either from them or from the fingers, and their middle joints were kept, in all circumstances, in a direct line with the forearm. Arm-weight and other such terms were unknown to him. Such playing as his was never heard again until Pachmann reached his height; when he goes one is left to wonder when another will arise who will strike chords as he has struck them, who will use his nerves instead of his muscles, who will concentrate upon his tone in such a way as never to forget the tonal limits of an instrument which was not intended to send forth the same volume of sound as an organ or an orchestra.

So that if we concentrate in our own private practice for the purpose of producing perfect tone we do well to remember that *forte* and *fortissimo* are relative terms. Concentration upon tone in a player who loves the pianoforte for what it really is, and not for what some have tried to make it, necessitates a very calm state of mind.

It means an endless series of cool judgments of passage after passage, phrase after phrase, bar after bar, as they pass, like the electric news-sign, before him. The slightest fault in the position of the hands and wrist, the smallest muscular effort to get at a note somewhat out of reach, may cause the tone to become patchy. The sensitive mind in full concentration realises it in a flash, and the passage is repeated very much softer and considerably slower. It is subjected to repeated rehearsal, the tone growing up to the required strength and the speed to the required pace. It is then subjected to further practice, repetition in rapid succession, until there is no possible chance of getting out of position when rendering it. The whole matter takes but a few minutes, which go like seconds. And here, merely because I have just remembered it, I take the opportunity to say that time spent in warming the hands in cold weather until they are in perfect condition is time well spent. It is useless to sit down, however keen one may be, with hands that are even cool. That is about as sensible as getting up at six o'clock in the morning to practise before breakfast in a room which has had no fire in it since the previous evening, and at a time when the emotions are at their lowest ebb. In such circumstances we are lucky if we hit the right notes; of tone we need not think at all.

And, finally, our concentration having been studied in these three ways, we find it possible to begin to knit the whole together. We have come to the stage when we have ceased to remember the printed score and have taken to *remembering the sounds*. But not before we have undergone further strain. Certainly not before we have taken the score to bed with us and have lain awake reproducing every note, every point of fingering, every tone in our minds. We have looked out of our railway carriage window at the green fields or the house-tops without seeing anything but a printed score: we have heard the rumbling of the train only as part of the other sounds which have coursed through our mental ears. But with every moment we can spare given to the absorption of some great work, it has become our own at last, and we merely remember the sounds—the only safe way for public work. The concentration needed for perfection in pianism is appalling at first; but we are creatures of habit after all, and it is perfectly amazing how soon the mind sways the body. To those who suffer from wandering thoughts or from a tendency to hurry passages through, I would suggest that their practice be of very short duration. To leave a copy open upon the desk and to go to the instrument with fifteen or twenty minutes to spare only, and to use that period in a rehearsal of some awkward passage at a very slow pace, returning to it for a similar length of time later in the day—several times, if possible—is a thoroughly sane

and sensible course of procedure. It is astonishing to find how really difficult works can be worked up to perfection in this manner.

One thing remains to be discussed—the question of technical exercises. I am not competent to say much about them because I never devote much time to them. I have found in my own case that they are best improvised to suit the situation. Mine are always done with a view to increasing speed in shakes; that is to say, that a form of phraseology is used which tends to help the fingers to become independent. To say that practising scales is a waste of time is rather sweeping, but if qualified by a suggestion that one meets all the scales one requires in one's Bach and Beethoven the statement may have some little weight in it. Pure technique is less valuable than applied technique, and as one has to give so much time in applying for the purpose of performing the works of the great masters such technique as one has been fortunate enough to amass, it is not advisable to spend too much time in something which can never be the end and which is not always the means. At the same time, I keep a very open mind upon the subject and feel that it is unwise to lay down hard and fast rules. Concentration against the incapacitating effect of 'nerves' when playing in public is equally difficult to discuss. It is largely a question of our whole attitude. If we see to it that our work is so well known that there is little chance of failure in the ordinary technical sense we have done a good deal. If we choose our pieces for performance out of the very love we have for them, and if we work ourselves into the state of mind which makes us ache to let others share their beauties with us, we are quite likely to approach the platform in a condition which will quickly produce its reflex in those who listen to us.

C. WHITAKER-WILSON.

CHILD STUDIES IN MUSIC—II

In our first essay we sketched the idealistic type of child study which began, ninety years ago, with Schumann's 'Kinderscenen.' We tried to put down in words its main peculiarities, emotional and technical; we then traced their persistence in modern works as diverse as the 'Shulbrede Tunes' of Sir Hubert Parry and the suite 'En Vacances' by Déodat de Séverac. There prevails a note of cosy sentiment in the contemplation of the child and his activities. At the same time, there is no little truth of insight. Schumann not only loves but understands the child's whole-heartedness of mood; he makes us feel it, whether the little protagonist listens to tales by the fireside or whether he revels in the pageant of his 'important event.' Séverac, too, brings home to us the child's absorption in make-believe. Now and then, portraiture may be overlaid by subjective, lyric tenderness, as in Parry's second 'Dolly' piece, or by sheer joking, as in his fantasy on 'Three Blind Mice,' or by the pretty automatism of Séverac's 'Musical Box.' In technical habits there is a tendency not only to miniature form—we confine ourselves to that—but also to warmth of harmony, to balanced melodic sentences, and in particular to a type of melody, pensive or legendary, charged with an atmosphere of fireside story-telling. This is most noticeable in Schumann, but easily traced in his successors, best of all in Séverac's exquisite 'Invocation.'

The child of these idealist composers lives in a sheltered world, built round him by the fond fancies and wishes of his elders. He is a good child, inclined to dreams. He is that partly because his elders are so inclined; he is 'good' because he falls in with their moods. He is too like them to be a child of the real world. Schumann's little boy is good even on his hobby-horse; we know that if we look like stopping our ears at the din he will come off his mount at once. Séverac's children play, with fitting propriety, at being church beadles or marchionesses. A roomful of them may dance; even then the daintily-spun valse, with all its gaiety, seems a symbol of their

delicate, guarded paradise of a world. No shadow in its sky that is not soon dispelled. No harm can come into it from without.

To pass from such a world to that of Moussorgsky's 'Songs of the Nursery' is to touch the opposite pole of our subject. The change is not altogether a pleasant one. This composer's work is still so scantily known in England that the songs, though now sixty years old, can still shock us with their outlandish strangeness. Moussorgsky wrote his own words for them; frankly childish and in places morbid. Of the seven numbers, one tells of a gruesome encounter between a child and a cockchafer; another relates how a child scared away a cat that was watching a bird-cage. There is also a hobby-horse ride, ending in bruises and screams and maternal consolation. The power of the music is bound to dawn before long on all but the most conventionally minded, but there are stumbling-blocks in it even for the experienced. One is Moussorgsky's fanatic insistence on the musical reproduction of verbal rhythm, and of the rise and fall of the speaking voice. In none of the songs does he spare us this; in the first, 'Tell me a story,' he throws off practically every shred of melody and changes his time-signature twenty-seven times in some fifty bars. Seldom do we find a song borne along on a firm melodic line. The accompaniment, simple yet unfailingly graphic, is often its chief unifying factor. On the whole, the outlandishness both of words and music is enough to give pause, at first, to an English musician not unusually eclectic in his sympathies.

To understand 'The Nursery' it is well to grasp firmly certain other peculiarities of the composer. He was a democrat in music if ever there was one, a kindred spirit of Dostoievsky and Tolstoy. The realistic method in his art was avowedly in league with his social sympathies. So, to some degree, was his much-talked-of amateurishness, his fierce avoidance of the conventional, his determination to bring music by some means or other, tried or untried, into closer relationship with life. 'To seek the most delicate and subtle features of human nature . . . to follow them into unknown regions, to make them our own; this,' he wrote to his friend Stassov, 'seems to me the true vocation of the artist.' He saw children, not from the vantage ground of the parent, but just as one section of a humanity which was to be loved, pitied, and understood.

Since the days when Liszt praised them; since 1901, when Debussy, almost with bated breath, told Paris about them in the *Revue Blanche*, good judges have not faltered in their allegiance to 'Songs of the Nursery.' Their power at its best seems that of actual divination. How might a tiny girl sing a lullaby to her doll? How find music spontaneous, unprettified, giving the tone, the rise and fall of the little voice, its crooning monotony, its fragility? How

touch all this with the craftsman's wand just sufficiently to make it a work of art? Moussorgsky has shown us:—

1 *Andante*

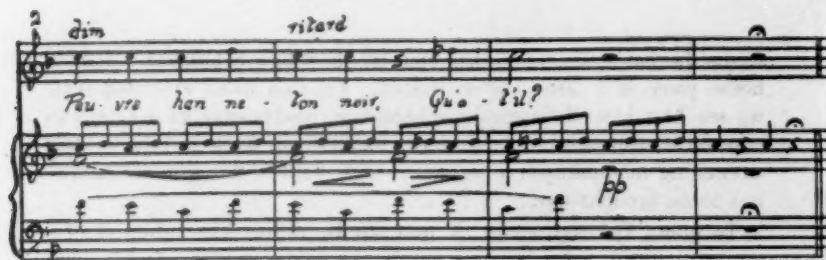
Dol-ly by : by - Dol-ly lul-la-by -

Close your eyes & take your rest Dol-ly Hush, dol-ly! Dol-ly lul-la-by

Like a shadow comes the threat: 'Bogy-man will come if you don't sleep.' For a bar or two the music darkens and descends in the scale. Then the girl sings to her doll of the dreams it will see; the little shreds of melody in our example take wing again and float over a bass drone that starts up like an incantation. Then a pause: the song fades out in fragments and eloquent rests; Debussy thinks the lullaby has charmed the girl herself to sleep. He thinks, too—and anyone conquered by the little masterpiece will agree with him—that every note seems to have been divined, that the art of it is clairvoyance rather than composition.

Such a work almost excuses the assertion that the realist at his best can beat the idealist off the field. Schumann may have had as much love and reverence for childhood as had Moussorgsky. But of such insight, even with words to help him, he would have been incapable. Somehow, somewhere, if he had attempted such a song, *Gemüth* would have found him out. If only in the accompaniment, his own voice would have been heard, singing of his feelings, celebrating them in the German way. Never could he have sunk himself so entirely in what he was depicting. The idealist tends not to look

at things but through them; too often he burks them or wraps them up to suit his dreams or his theories. He may have real love for his object, but he gets in its way; his pure sentiment for it may turn to sentimentality, that counterfeit that has its root in self-indulgence. The realist looks straight at things; if his sight is clear enough and his patience with his art sufficient, an unconscious process of selection in his mind transmutes his impression, transforms it into an art-work not only of truth but of beauty. But Moussorgsky had not enough patience with his art; hence his exasperating methods of hit-or-miss. Nor did he always see clearly; he had the realist's weakness for seeing things uglier than they are. Much of the song in 'The Nursery' about the cockchafer is laboured to repulsiveness; he might have been writing about Fafner. A little boy tells his nurse how the creature flew at his forehead as he was playing and stunned itself. For thirty bars and more the insect writhes and squirms in the bass clef before darting up on a nerve-shattering discord. We may allow for the magnifying of such an incident in the child's mind and yet concede that such methods are too nearly akin to those of the Fat Boy in *Pickwick*. Yet the song as a whole has real power, manifest in a strangely simple form in its ending. The creature that so frightened the little boy lies on its back, *in extremis*; the waving figure in the accompaniment that seems to embody its life, falters and stops. Above it, the child's halting, awestruck voice asks, is it dead? Or what ails it? We give the French words as the better translation:—



From this seeming-trivial incident reality has started up with a vengeance. The child is left face to face with the reality in which of all others he finds it hardest to believe. How far are we now from 'Kinderacenen,' and its sheltered, impossible world?

Moussorgsky's is an actual nursery, where anything may happen. He keeps a wonderful hold on the motley little cosmos; with strokes of cunning simplicity he fixes his child-types. For a little way, at least, we can trace his methods. He is primarily a vocal writer; the

voice, as a rule, draws the main lines of the musical picture. The composer's fidelity to verbal inflection and rhythm makes us not only hear the voices, but even, sometimes, see the actions of the children. Many moods of excitement, or alarm, of chattering or cajoling, go naturally into his lively verbal types of melody. Of the sustained kind that Schumann loved there are very few instances. A beautiful one occurs half way through 'The Hobby Horseman,' where a little hero, bruised and out of action, is consoled by his mother. But in the main part of this song, the accompaniment for once draws the chief lines, and keeps the player busy; its mettlesome triplet rhythm, cut into by goading semiquavers



forms the basis of a miniature epic beside which Schumann's hobby-horse piece is a tame sketch indeed. On this more extended scale we see best how Moussorgsky's harmony, unobtrusive as a rule, can take on strangeness at need; how, too, he can keep in reserve bold wrenching modulations, when some high light in his musical picture has to be brought out.

To quote Debussy again, it may all be rather like 'the art of a strange savage discovering music by the tracks of his own impressions.' But before Moussorgsky's successes, criticism must be careful. Even his failures may be condoned for the motive underlying them. The boldness, the insight, the self-surrender, above all, the reverence of his best work in 'The Nursery' put to shame all but a very few composers who have attempted child study in music. He has given us his secret in words. When Liszt had praised the songs, their creator wrote to Stassov: 'Liszt amazes me. If I am a musical simpleton, it seems I was not one when I wrote "The Nursery."' . . . For to understand children, to look upon them as human beings

with minds of their own and not as so many amusing dolls, is not the privilege of a simpleton.' We must excuse here the growl of a sensitive man who suffered much from hidebound criticism. He did indeed look upon children as beings with minds of their own, and he almost merged his mind in theirs.

Since his day, it is to be feared, those who have written music about children have often treated them as 'so many amusing dolls.' Of purely pedagogic work we are not writing; yet much music, ostensibly child study, is given to children to play. If it condescends, or jeers, they see through it and hate it; even of sincere child study a young player of any mettle soon grows impatient; he wants to tackle grown-up stuff. There is a limbo of modern music, stocked with marches of tin soldiers and laments for broken dolls and the other mechanical properties of the child's world as seen by the trivially minded adult. It has little enough to do with musical art. Such things are sometimes produced, by clever composers, for amusement; in them they try out entertaining experiments on the small scale and with the slender resources necessary. Any vision, or insight into childhood, is usually far to seek. Just now and then real talent, or genius itself, has touched and transformed this gimcrack world.

Debussy's 'Children's Corner' remains one of his most likable small things. Its technical demands do not daunt the amateur. It cannot in the strict sense be called child study; though the composer chooses subjects belonging to the children's world, he does not see through their eyes, as Moussorgsky at his best is almost able to do. Rather, he sees, as usual, very much through his own eyes; with real love in his heart he weaves little fantasies that will appeal to children even if they cannot play them. He uses a thinner, tinier, more restricted piano technique than is customary with him. But the fantasies themselves are of his own poetic mint—the lumberings of the drowsy elephant, the tinklings and strummings of the doll's serenade, the snow piece, that wonder of drifting delicacy. The 'Little Shepherd' comes nearest to an actual child portrait, but he is scarcely tangible; his insistent pipings call to us from far away across fields of romance.

In his later days Debussy made a less successful venture, the 'Boîte à Joujoux.' These tiny, scrappy studies come near to realism of Satie's kind, but they lack the sharpness, the biting finish, that make us forgive that composer, often enough, for his japes and absurdities. Satie has himself written three little sets of child studies, whose absurd titles do them no justice; they are not mere jests, but kindly in humour, keen and concise as ever in style. Ravel, in 'Ma Mère L'Oie,' made music from fairy-tales with his rare, meticulous craftsmanship. Even without the accompanying action of the

ballet, children must enjoy the valse of Beauty and the Beast; adults, too, can thank him for such a musical impression as the 'Fairy Garden,' with the mellow dignity of its opening, the blazing brilliance of its close. 'Petit Poucet' (Hop o' my Thumb) comes more clearly into the category of child study. It is a creation of singular pathos, with its forlorn wandering melody, its plodding, block harmonies, its realisation of the endless roaming of the woodcutter's sons in the forest where they have lost their way.

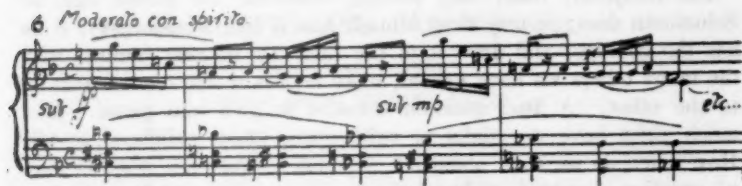


The very care and labour of its technical finish are seen in the end not to make for monotony but to define and accentuate its real note of pity.

Elgar's lovely orchestral miniature 'Dream Children,' from 'The Wand of Youth,' may be taken to be in the German idealistic succession. Distantly, through the composer's own idiom, we can trace Schumann's tender gravity of melody and harmony. In these few bars the wistful essence of Lamb's reverie is wonderfully distilled. Since Debussy, many English writers have brought his peculiar harmonic blurrings into children's pieces; Cyril Scott, for example, has done it deftly, if cloyingly, in his 'Young Hearts.' But perhaps 'Kaleidoscope,' by Eugene Goossens, shows the tendencies of modern child study in the most entertaining way. Some of these pieces are mere mechanism; others are still remarkable for their blend of neatness and audacity, both of harmony and of general conception. The neatness, indeed, often stiffens them, just as it stiffens the sketches in 'Kinderscenen.' The grinding harmonies are not always mechanical; even in a piece on so stale a subject as a broken doll, Goossens can use his modern chords with real piercing poignancy and suggest in his melody, too, something of the child's wondering desolation:—



'A Merry Party' has a melodic line noticeably Schumannesque, poised quaintly enough on the chromatic block-harmonies of modern fashion :—



In fact, when their styles are germane to his own purpose, Goossens can make his bow with impartiality to the idealistic and the realistic schools. For it is not difficult to hear Moussorgsky in the rhythm and the harmony of the horrific 'Ghost Story,' one of the most painful, but most interesting numbers in the collection.

The child of 'Kaleidoscope' is modern in his dash and his cheekiness. His 'Good-morning,' for example, embodies a descending chromatic scale that cuts its way maddeningly through foreign harmonies. So, doubtless, will this child cut his way, all he can, through the conventions and prejudices of his elders. A kindred spirit—an imp of larger stature if in coarser garments—is John Ireland's 'Ragamuffin.' Compact musically of jaunty rhythm and prickly chords he dances his way through London streets. Schumann, we fear, would not have approved of him, and his outrageous final *glissando* of defiance. Moussorgsky would have loved him.

It is time now to set the two types of child-study over against each other. It seems they cannot be reconciled; at least, no genius has yet shown us that they can be. Idealist and realist each attain their own kind of beauty and truth. As M. Combarieu has said: 'Schumann remains a spectator of the youngster's games; he dreams, he thinks and feels . . . he is profoundly touched, as though in contemplation of a pellucid stream or a starry sky.' The child world he gazes upon loses its shadows and its rough edges; with it there mingle recollections of his own young days—idealised, as always happens. The lively physical aspect of child life he acknowledges, but stiffly; his slow melodies sing themselves out of the depths of his heart. In them he tries, apparently, to embody the essence of all that is secure and homely and loving in the child world. The dangers of such an attitude are only too clear; they are writ large on German romantic music. But to be sentimental is perhaps not worse than to be ugly, untidy or laboured, as Moussorgsky can be when his insight fails, or when his impatience with his art gets the better of him. For clairvoyance as uncanny as his, a stiff price has to be paid. His very reverence for the child has its reverse side;

it shuts out ease and geniality. Perhaps only a Slav would have risked what he risked, in thus yielding his own nature up to childhood.

The composer, then, may lovingly celebrate the golden age, as Schumann does; or may fling himself into it like Moussorgsky, if he has the courage, and draw it to the life. Or he may incline, with the many others we have named, more or less to the one extreme or to the other. A final question remains to give him pause. How much right have we adults to write music about childhood at all? How much do we know about it? I wonder sometimes whether such a question haunted Schumann in his epilogue, 'Der Dichter spricht.' 'A sentimental thing,' an objector may say. 'Look at *as* cadenza! And, anyhow, there was no need for the poet to speak.' It may be, however, that he put in that last word expressly, just to tell us that he could say very little.



Those rests, those hushed, syncopated chords say to me something like this: 'I have tried to sing to you of childhood, but what do I know? I have faltered; any adult must falter in the task.'

Vanity had little place in Schumann's nature; he must have realised what is, after all, the truth. Our grown-up minds, however they try, cannot rightly appreciate the child's mental world; he can tell us of it very imperfectly. We can only partly understand how he regards his own surroundings. As for our recollections of our own childish days, they grow distorted, idealised; they may help us, but less and less. Schumann, I like to fancy, gave us in his epilogue a quiet reminder that there is a time to speak and a time to keep silence. He, or Debussy, or Moussorgsky may enrich the world of music with creations fondly thought to suggest, or depict, the child and his world. But modesty and truth soon prompt them to be silent. 'Speak not, whisper not,' the epilogue may be saying; we know children as they know us, only in part; as for our own childhood, the stirrings and the scents come ever more faintly from that sunken garden of our lives.

W. WRIGHT ROBERTS.

NOT QUITE AND NOT AT ALL

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ON HEARING DISTANT MUSIC

It is very pleasant to overhear music, to eavesdrop as it were, upon some performance which is not primarily intended for our ears. I am fully aware that there is a cantankerous proverb which discourages listeners, on the ground that they never hear any good of themselves. If it were true what a dreadful indictment of human nature! But, happily for all of us, it is not true. Personally I refuse to believe that those many delightful people whom I have the privilege to call my friends pass their time, when I am not present in their company, in an orgy of back-biting, lying and slandering and worse still, that they confine the back-biting, lying and slandering to me. No, whatever evil they may speak of others (probably they deserve it) I like to think that occasionally, perhaps every twenty-ninth of February, my friends agree to speak kindly and gratefully of me. So, in spite of the proverb, I shall still continue to practise musical eavesdropping whenever I get a chance.

The most common form in which we can hear distant music is a chime of bells, a subject dear to the hearts of hymn-writers. When the chime is near to us we are all too aware of its faulty intonation, but when we hear the self-same chime, now soft, now loud, as it is wafted by the breezes over the hills and valleys, its imperfections pass unnoticed, and our minds are flooded with tender memories of days that are gone and friends who are no more. It is a beautiful sound, but it is saddening because bells are the voice of Father Time reminding us that our lives are but a mere scrap of eternity. But not such be our musings; rather let us think of things more full of joy and happiness.

Next, there is the sound of a distant band. This is a very different pair of shoes. We know that what we dimly hear is only the effort of the village band, an institution remarkable for the vigour of the blowing than for the beauty of performance, but yet how entrancing its brazen discords sound at a distance of a mile or so! And how the children run! No Pied Piper ever drew the young folks from their homes more surely or speedily than does this distant band. The fact that it causes the dogs to bark, the hens to cackle, and the donkey to Bray in no way diminishes the pleasure we feel as we strain our ears

to catch the distant tune (alas, only Under the double-eagle!) rendered still more inaudible and elusive by the combined canine and asinine accompaniment.

All these sounds (the bells and the band, not the donkey and the dogs), though they are not particularly pleasant in themselves, become delightful to the ravished sense when heard from a distance, not only because they *are* distant but because we realise that they were made for others and that we are eavesdropping on their private pleasures. My own village church-bells do not sound so alluring to me as do those distant peals of bells from the church beyond the hill, and I know from experience that the village band when playing on my own lawn does not minister to my pleasure so greatly as when it is making the squire's life unbearable at the other end of the village. But, on the other hand, I suspect that my village church-bells seem more persuasive and irresistible to the villagers beyond the hill than do their own much more fully equipped chime, and I know for a fact that the squire much prefers to hear the village band when they are performing on my lawn, in fact I believe he would enjoy their performance most if they were performing to a Maori chief somewhere in the Antipodes.

In hearing distant music, an uneasy feeling of theft adds greatly to the enjoyment. It is slightly akin to the feeling we get when we steal a glimpse of a garden through a door in a high wall, unwittingly left open by a careless gardener. Would that all gardeners were careless so that we might be allowed to peep occasionally at their handiwork as we pass along our dusty weary way! All snatches of scenery seen through masonry seem lovely: the part seems greater than the whole. In one of our cathedrals, the west door was occasionally opened on hot summer days to allow the fresh air, carefully stored since the previous summer, to go for a short holiday. Through the open door could be seen a snatch of the sky, an acre or so of grass upon which boys in nice white flannels could be seen flitting about in a medley of bowling, batting and fielding. Often as I saw that view from outside, it never looked so exquisitely pastoral and peaceful as it did when seen from the inside of the cool and shadowy cathedral. With such enhanced loveliness does a snatch of melody strike our ears when we hear it in unfamiliar surroundings. To hear a great pianist practising on a summer night on the further side of a wide lake, is an experience far more wonderful than that which a concert frequenter can ever feel. How exciting it is trying to discover what the music is which he is playing, constructing a sort of jigsaw puzzle—with exquisite fragments of music in place of meaningless sections of woods! We hear a large widespread chord of C major, followed by an equally large and widespread chord of G major: now C minor:

now G major. Surely it is the rondo from the Waldstein Sonata. Now it dips suddenly into A minor. Yes, it is the Waldstein. And having discovered the music, we lie back in our easy chairs in the warm evening air to enjoy the next section of music as it emerges from an imperceptible *pianissimo* to a well outlined *forte*. Now, when we pay for a ticket and are seated within four walls to hear this self-same sonata, although we do undoubtedly enjoy it, the mere fact that it is paid for and therefore almost our right, robs it of the unexpected pleasure which we obtained from the overheard performance. The one is a birthday present, very enjoyable but expected; the other is a non-birthday present and how much more delightful that is!

Ticket-holders at concerts and festivals may feel superior or even sorry for the heterogeneous crowd which stand Peri-like outside the door waiting for scraps of music to ooze from the paradise within. This crowd does not really require sympathy. It is true that they do not hear all that goes on, but the parts which they do hear probably sound more lovely than does the whole performance to those who sit inside. At least, I judge that it must be so from the frequent objurgations of harassed mothers to their restive offspring, 'Don't cry, there's a dear! listen to the lovely music. Isn't it lovely?' These comments (no spelling can represent the heights of happiness expressed by the long-drawn-out adjective) can be heard on all sides when some doorkeeper, letting out some fainting ticket-holder, lets out at the same time a torrent of hallelujahs from singers and players within. With what eagerness do these eavesdroppers crane forward their heads to catch these fragrant morsels when the door is opened, and with what patient resignation they sway back again when the door once more is closed.

Finally, there is a form of hearing music which, though not exactly eavesdropping, is made more beautiful by the distance from which it seems to come. This form of hearing music has upon the mind a result comparable to the action of those mysterious and noxious drugs from the East. Critics will guess what I mean. I refer to the lovely effect of music, as it strikes our senses while we slowly fall asleep. As the music recedes from our consciousness we seem to swim or float in an ocean of harmony, freed from the tiresome law of gravitation, falling and rising as the waves of sound eddy and surge around us. Dreams as fantastic as those of De Quincey and uniformly beautiful flit through our brains with such incredible swiftness that a dream-journey through a moon-lit wood, which in real life would take several hours, is performed to the accompaniment of a single harmony. Indeed, if people knew the pleasure to be derived from a musical siesta, concert giving would become a lucrative employment, financed by wealthy capitalists and advertised by the Stock Exchange, while

our concert halls so rarely shaken by the noise of applause would reverberate with the deep and regular breathing of a blissfully somnolent multitude.

ON UNHEARD MELODIES

Long before the days of John Keats, there was a universal belief in the existence of unheard melodies. Most of these unheard melodies were, of course, supposed to have been heard by some person or persons, but curiously enough the most famous of these unheard melodies is one which has never been heard at all. I refer to that well-known mythical melody of such deplorable ugliness that it caused the immediate death of an ancient domestic quadruped. It is, indeed, a significant fact that nearly all these unheard melodies are connected with tragedies. For instance, the Song of the Syrens was only heard by those who paid for the privilege with their lives. And again, when we wish to tell of a swindle of which we have been the victim we say that we have been dunned to the tune of a thousand pounds.

Now although we are inclined to admire John Keats' poetic fancy that unheard melodies are sweeter than those we hear, still, we refuse to believe that it is true in actual fact, because it is impossible for us to imagine tunes except in melodic phrases with which we are familiar. I suppose that the majority of people who think of the syrens associate their song with the fascinating music which Wagner wrote for the Rhine maidens in the closing scene of *Das Rheingold*. To realise that unheard melodies make no appeal to our imaginations we only have to recollect how little the compositions of fictitious composers appeal to us. In that highly emotional novel *The Rosary*, Mrs. Florence Barclay made her hero, Garthie Dalmain, write the most beautiful tune in the world to the words 'The radiant morn hath passed away.' No one can really believe that the tune was even passably beautiful, because it is more than probable that Mrs. Barclay was thinking of a setting to those words by the late Rev. H. H. Woodward, who was a passionate admirer and fervent disciple of Spohr and Gounod. It is quite possible, it is even probable, that there are still many melodies to be written transcending in beauty any that have so far been given to the world, but such unheard melodies, in that sense, are, as far as we are concerned, hidden from the ears of all living.

The real question of interest arising from John Keats' epigram, is whether highly-trained musicians can get more satisfaction mentally by reading a full score than by an actual performance. Some people assert that only in their mental readings do they get absolutely ideal performances. Whether they do depends upon several things. In the first place, a good deal depends upon what they consider an ideal

performance. I suppose that the most muddle-headed conductor who ever misdirected an orchestra fondly thinks that, given good conditions, he could secure a finer performance of some great work than other, and eminent, men. When, therefore, he gives himself the pleasure of a mental performance he fancies that he has realised the ideal. Alas! all he has done is to put himself beyond the range of criticism. When I claim that I get a better performance mentally than does some eminent conductor I am merely patting myself on the back and saying, 'See what a fine fellow I am, I entirely agree with my own opinion.'

There are, of course, certain great advantages to be gained by mental performances, but we are bound to admit that in one respect they suffer badly when compared to audible performances; that is, they miss the actual concussion of sound waves upon the sensitive nerves of the ear. However faithfully we mentally realise the volume of tone of a fine chorus singing the Sanctus from Bach's Mass in B minor, we shall never get quite the same thrill as when the sound waves bearing those harmonies are dashed against the drum of the ear. In fact every art must be tested ultimately by its appeal to the sense or senses for which it was designed. No description of a picture or a landscape, however faithful and poetical it be, will thrill us so keenly as does the actual vision. Anyone who has climbed the higher Alps knows that no description or photograph, marvellous though many Alpine photographs are, can ever produce that feeling of wonder and awe which the climber feels when he actually stands or hangs upon those perilous slopes.

To read an orchestral work from the score is comparable to silently reading a drama which was written for the stage. I purposely say for the stage because there are many dramas, by Browning, Byron, Coleridge and Swinburne, which were written for the study and are therefore in the form in which the authors intended them to be judged. If we read 'Atalanta in Calydon' of Swinburne we shall enjoy it more than if we saw it acted upon the stage. But no reading of 'The School for Scandal,' to name only one stage play, can give us the thrill which we get from seeing Lady Teazle actually discovered by Sir Peter behind the screen in Joseph Surface's room. Now every composer is a Sheridan rather than a Swinburne, that is, he writes with a view to performance, and each score which he gives to the world is intended to be judged by performance, consequently by performance alone should it be ultimately judged.

Granting, then, that every unheard melody loses something by being inaudible, is there anything to be said for silent readings of scores? One obvious advantage springs immediately to the mind—the sweeping away of all technical and physical limitations. When I

give myself the pleasure of an ideal (I mean of course my own) performance of Beethoven's Mass in D Major, my singers find no difficulty in sustaining their top notes with unbelievable brilliance; their runs in the second part of the *Et vitam venturi* chorus have the smoothness of an eight-cylinder motor engine; they can sing top notes pianissimo or fortissimo with equal ease; finally, they can sing for any length of time without breathing, an accomplishment which adds enormously to the splendour of my performance of the Choral Symphony, a *tour de force* which some vastly enterprising chorus master might like to emulate with *his* singers. How brilliantly that top note blazes over the moving parts beneath! How smoothly my fourth horn steers his way through those dangerous chromatic waters, free from all anxiety of bubble or squeak!

How easily, too, I surpass all the most renowned soloists. No practice is necessary and I dispense with rehearsals. My performance of the C sharp minor Quartet, and the Great Fugue in B flat, of Beethoven, would cast the Lener Quartet-players into the Slough of Despond, not that I surpass them in execution or interpretation, but simply because I attain the most perfect *ensemble* without a single rehearsal. My attack is unanimous, my phrasing identical in each part, my intonation faultless, and all this without a moment's practice. Every instrument comes easily to me. I can throw off the most hair-raising difficulties on the pianoforte with no more effort than would be necessary for a five-finger exercise. So also my violin playing for ease and gracefulness would make Mr. Kreisler appear a bungling beginner. Yes, I have a good deal of praise to bestow upon these mental performances of mine, which no one hears but myself.

Besides this immunity from possible mistakes, a mental reading has this added value to the reader—he can take for granted many tiresome repetitions, and can skip all passages which he does not like. How Schubert's music gains by this system! His C major Symphony now lasts for a heavenly half-an-hour instead of an unearthly hour-and-a-quarter. Besides the ability to cut passages at will, the mental reader can omit from chords the notes which offend him, thus transforming a sickly Spohr into a robust Brahms, very much after the example of one of Mr. Punch's learned clerks, who found that by putting sticking-plaster over the holes in a pianola roll which he did not want, he could turn the Tannhäuser overture into 'Home, sweet Home.'

But after all, these mental readings are only possible if a work is already familiar, so that in no sense can these melodies be called unheard. There are many passages which could not be satisfactorily heard mentally unless they had been previously heard with the outward ear. There are passages even which can never be adequately heard

mentally, however familiar we are with the score. Let me marshal forth my witnesses. The first, a very simple passage, occurs in Wesley's 'Wilderness' and is the transition from the words 'The unclean shall not pass over it' to the words 'But the redeemed shall walk there.' Now, however clearly we auralise the chord before the word 'But,' the peculiar effect which the upper partials of the harmony gives to this chord can never quite be realised. In fact, I do not think that any organist can hear mentally the necessary registration for any piece he plays. Certainly Cesar Franck could not do so for his own great Chorales. The next witness is the passage in Gerontius—'This strange innermost abandonment.' Here it is quite easy to imagine the effect of the divided strings, but only an actual performance can give us that eerie feeling which comes over us as the strings move on to the word 'abandonment.' The next witness comes from Brahms's Requiem and is the setting of the words 'We shall *all* be changed.' No reading of the music at the word 'all,' no playing on the pianoforte even, can give us the ghostly effect which is caused by the string tone passing through the transparent choral tone. Finally, I summon a passage which I feel sure no mental reading can reproduce—it is the 'Mors Stupebit' from Verdi's Requiem, so mysterious that it must be heard to be believed.

In all these four passages the mental reading misses something inexplicable but nevertheless real, just as the smoker in the dark misses the full taste of the tobacco, and as a person with a bad cold misses the full flavour of strawberries he cannot smell.

It would seem then that in spite of a few advantages, mental readings will never be as thrilling as actual performances. We may mentally reproduce the sound of the voices, the *timbre* of the instruments and the thud of the drums, just as we can remember the taste of sultanas, raisins and sugar, but the proof of the pudding will always be in the eating.

A. E. BRENT SMITH.

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C. B. O.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

William Byrd. By Frank Howes. Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d. net.

In this very readable book the music is discussed before the man's life is described, an inversion of the usual method, but justified here by the result. The author writes with a persuasive eloquence, slightly, rather humorously, 'popular,' as though he himself shared some of that Quaker ability for seeing more than one side of a case which, he lays it down, Byrd came within sight of. It is points like that which give vitality to the book. No one before Mr. Howes has thought of comparing William Byrd with the followers of George Fox, a comparison which might well have shocked the Quaker of a hundred years ago but which will probably please the 'young Friend' of to-day, who no longer sees in music a devilish wile. Another comparison the author makes, less startling yet less easily accepted, is between the innovations of Byrd and those of Monteverde. There need be no question as to their relative merits as composers. Both made works of great beauty and lasting worth. Byrd, the composer, stands firmly on an equal footing with Monteverde, who was twenty years his junior. Only when we look into the large extent of the Italian master's conquests of new ground, the management of harmonic progression, the technique of vocal and instrumental writing, dramatic sense such as never before, only then do we see that Byrd, living as he did in the unsettled times of Elizabethan England with church music and domestic vocal music (or the simplest instrumental concords) as sole means of expression, can hardly be thought to have rivalled as an innovator Monteverde, who could call on the larger resources of Mantuan court and Venetian cathedral. One more small point. If, as the author of this book says, Byrd 'is the first great composer to write music for keyboard instruments,' then he is run close by the Dutchman Sweelinck who died two years before him and whose 'Mein junges Leben hat ein End' (to take only a random example, but that an exquisite one) is a set of variations on a popular tune, showing much ingenuity of pianistic invention, as well as haunting poetic beauty. Byrd reaches Mr. Howes' estimate, but by a few years only. However, these are arguments which in no way take from the value of this book. The author has succeeded wonderfully well in bringing a clear picture of the man, of his times, and of his music before one. With a gramophone, on which to play the records suggested by the author, instruction is concurrent with delight in the new loveliness revealed. It is the modern method of approach and the author has made excellent use of it.

Mozart. By Dyneley Hussey. Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d. net.

Mozart is a genius whose work is, as the author of this biographical study says, inseparable from his life. That is to say, the exoteric side of his life affected the main outlines of his music in style (Italy),

and in kind (the quasi-ecclesiastical compositions of the Salzburg period, the instrumental music of later years, the operas commissioned by Prague and Vienna). What the esoteric aspect of his life has to do with his music will never be known. Mozart's inner experiences have left sadly little trace, sadly because to have known something of the spiritual life of such a man would have been of incalculable value for future generations. What it was that conditioned the 'Zauberflöte' is hidden from us. All we can feel is that the man whose sensibilities were acute enough to write such deeply moving phrases must have amassed (intuitively or by the light of reason, it matters not) a large amount of wisdom, been acquainted with many and varied aspects of human suffering and joy, been gulled by hopes and tormented by despairs to an immeasurable extent. This will have affected his music, but exactly how it is impossible to guess. What is certain is that moving from city to city, from country to country, his receptive intelligence took stock of his surroundings and reacted instantly and fully to them. And it is because of that fact that Mr. Hussey is right in taking life and work *pari passu*. The book is carefully written with an excellent restraint in the critical judgments, both on the man and the musician.

Beethoven, his spiritual development. By J. W. N. Sullivan. Cape. 7s. 6d. net.

The author of this study of the mind of Beethoven has the advantage of himself possessing a mind fully exercised in the ways of scientific investigation and reasoning, and the views he puts forth in this book have a peculiar value both for the musician and the psychologist. There is always something stimulating in meeting with a book which deals with one of the arts and is written by a scientist, a feeling which is twofold, amusement in trying to catch the author out in points of detail on ground which is strange to him, interest in seeing whether the cool scientific intellect may be able to sift out and sum up in regions which are encumbered with many imperfectly formed theories. Mr. Sullivan comes through the first test fairly unscathed. His knowledge of Beethoven's music, though he never discusses that aspect of the subject more than is barely necessary, seems to be full, and he tells the actual tale of the life accurately. The main interest of the book lies, however, in the author's judgment about Beethoven the man, in the deductions he draws from the compositions, and above all in the important section of the book entitled 'The nature of music' where he sets forth certain conclusions as to the æsthetic of the art. The author lays it down that there exist three kinds of musical composition, firstly, those 'which exist in isolation' (abstract music); secondly, those 'which spring from a spiritual context and express spiritual experiences,' thirdly, those called programme music. 'Of these classes the second is the most important.' That last sentence exemplifies the startlingly arbitrary manner Mr. Sullivan sometimes employs. Since when has no 'importance' been attached to Strauss' tone-poems? And again is there no spiritual experience behind programme music or behind abstract music? The subject cannot be dismissed in a sentence. That the author himself finds some difficulty in fitting theory with practice is evident from a comparison of the two parts of

his book. In Part I he establishes music as an art unfettered by any references to reality, that is, presumably, as a means of communication not between man and man, but between the infinite spaces of the soul and the mind of any one listener. Its message is conditioned by the state of receptivity existent in that listener. What the composer 'meant' means nothing. '... in practice we almost always know nothing of the situation, if any, that was in the mind of the composer. Nevertheless, a great deal of writing on music consists in presentations of imagined situations. . . . ' Here there is nothing new, and had the author been able to keep his criticism of Beethoven's music within those bounds his book would have been even more valuable. But continually in Part II he falls back upon 'situations' to account for certain things which he finds in the music. 'Even in his earliest compositions there are indications of an experience of suffering altogether unusual in so young a boy.' Quite. But we must agree with the author of the first part of this book that such indications are valueless in determining what Beethoven's feelings were at that time, valueless as testimony of the state of Beethoven's mind, valueless as criticism of his music, of value only in so far as they provide a certain insight into the mind, not of the composer, but of the author. You can deduce things about a man's life from letters and conversations, nothing whatsoever from his music. Wagner is a prime instance of that. Mr. Sullivan has written a good book and it is a pity to have to pull it to pieces even in one place. The scientific mind has here rendered some, if small, aid in elucidating problems of the principles of music or of musical criticism.

Henry Purcell. By Denis Arundell. O.U. Press. 3s. 6d. net.

This book does much towards filling a void. It is a curious fact that Purcell, since long hailed as our greatest composer after Byrd, the stick so often and so effectively employed to belabour the broad back of Handel, the guiding star of a reawakened national musical consciousness, should have to wait a whole decade (since the tide set in his favour) for adequate biographical and critical treatment. At last Mr. Arundell has come along and in this short study repaid an old debt. His task cannot have been an easy one, that of sifting truth out of fiction, of weighing a large amount of rumour against the few attested facts. He was backed by the research of the late W. Barclay Squire, an invaluable mine of sure information. This, among other sources, he has been able to draw on for the material of his book, which is an extraordinarily good piece of compression, giving all that is known of the life of the composer (hardly enough, alas, to provide more than a thin wash drawing, where a liberal portrait, the central figure standing out from a closely detailed background would have been of immense interest), besides discussing the music in a way that illuminates the subject and arouses attention. The recent Cambridge performances of the 'Faerie Queene' and 'King Arthur,' clothed as they were with all the authority of deep research, have left an indelible impression on those fortunate enough to witness them. After them it is impossible to doubt that as a dramatic composer Purcell must be ranked high. For all that Mr. Holst's already oft-quoted sentence about the church music ('To judge Purcell by these longer sacred works would be as unfair as to judge Mozart by his Masses') is, as it stands, a perfectly

justifiable remark, the space given in this book to that side of Purcell's achievement is distributed thus with reason. The author rightly puts in a strong plea for a revaluation of the anthems and services, sunk now into deeper oblivion even than the dramatic works, for all that they have in part survived in performance; but that of such a poor order that, as the writer on Purcell in the third edition of *Grove's Dictionary* says, the music suffered more than by actual neglect, the 'instrumental parts . . . omitted, their rhythms . . . flattened out by the droning voices of "lay clerks" and their tempi . . . slowed down to suit conceptions of propriety. . . . ' By means of argument and illustration Mr. Arundell demonstrates the worth of the church music as being equal to that of the rest which though, until lately, left on the museum shelves, yet has not so much suffered the alterations and effacements of unorthodox usage.

Sc. G.

Light Opera. By Sterling Mackinlay. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

Fame's steep ascent made slippery with the frozen tears of centuries leads to a narrow ledge at giddy height, etc.' (p. 209). However, the book under review is not like this all the way. How the author began to acquire experience is related in two Jerome-like chapters. The work is extremely comprehensive. Acting, in its various phases, singing, dialogue, dancing and make-up all receive full treatment. To what extent producer and conductor will heed the views of others is doubtful. Autocrats are apt to be autocratic. But they and those responsible for scenery and lighting will find food for thought in this book. The question of repertoire is thoroughly gone into and a chapter is given to amateur operatic societies. In his determination to leave nothing out, the author has gone into matters which seem almost too elementary—a proceeding which he justifies in his introduction. Yet p. 136, where the question is touched upon, might well have been expanded into a chapter on 'Rehearsals.' However, the essential point is that the author has collected into one book all that any amateur need know on the subject, and those who would aspire to be professionals may well lay to heart the advice here given.

Origin and Development of Light Opera. By Sterling Mackinlay. Hutchinson. 21s.

Again, a most comprehensive work. 'Light opera must be gay. . . . There must be no tragic finish.' With this, roughly, as his definition, the author carries us from the Greek Dithyramb to 'Hugh the Drover,' taking 'Die Meistersinger' in his stride. After a brief history of drama and music in Greece and Italy, with due reference to Peri's momentous step and the later popularity of the 'Intermezzo,' which had such influence on French composers, we come to Rossini and Donizetti. French opéra-comique and opéra-bouffe naturally loom large, coupled especially with the names of Offenbach and Lecocq. The expression 'Gilbert and Sullivan' is, to many, synonymous with 'light opera.' In the section devoted to this subject—as, indeed, throughout—the author is historical and not critical. Perhaps the

time is not yet ripe to pass a just judgment on the results of this unique collaboration; but there can be no question that the operas as presented to-day are not as either Gilbert or Sullivan intended. The author has omitted reference to Gilbert and Clay's 'Princess Toto,' which, with its Hiawathan parody, had some success in 1875. The book has great value as a work of reference and is well indexed and—not too profusely—illustrated.

P. L. A.

Kings Jazz and David. Irving Schwerke. pp. x. and 249. Privately printed, Paris.

Mr. Schwerke has reprinted (not published) twenty-five studies, written mainly for periodicals in U.S.A. and Paris, upon aspects of modern music and musicians and addressed primarily to an American public. The article forming the first part of his title has obviously a wider appeal and is done in an appropriate pair of languages. His account of 'jazz' extends, in French with notes, to some sixteen pages. It is informative and provocative. The balance, which is habitual to Mr. Schwerke in his more theoretic attitudes, may be found, conspicuously, in his article (April, 1925) directed to subdue public enthusiasm about Honegger's *Le Roi David*. Here time has been on his side. His advocacy of the claims of some younger musicians, e.g., G. Nugit, J. Huré, V. Davico, H. Villa-Lobos, reveals a pardonable tendency to figure as swans his own geese rather than other people's. But the sense abides that should his bird not prove worthy of the swannery Mr. Schwerke will in due course hand him back to the goose-herd. Some descriptive sketches of Chopin, George Sand and Mallorca allow his pen to flower more happily.

W. M. M.

The musical pilgrim. Edited by Dr. Arthur Somervell. Schubert's quartet in D minor and octet, by A. Brent Smith. A study of Mozart's last three symphonies, by A. E. F. Dickinson. Mendelssohn, by Cyril Winn. Schumann's pianoforte works, by J. A. Fuller Maitland. Tchaikovsky's orchestral works, by Eric Blom. Beethoven's op. 18 quartets, by W. H. Hadow. Mozart's string quartets, 2 vols., by Thomas F. Dunhill. O.U. Press. 1s. 6d. net each.

The pilgrimage continues, the visitation to shrine after shrine shows no signs of abatement. The little books that result from the pious exercises of the writers named above have an undeniable use. They are handbooks for the uninitiated, an excellent aid to the comprehension of gramophone records and through them of concert performances. It is not always easy to gather what governed the choice of certain works, as against certain others, for purposes of description. Mr. Blom quite rightly spends time on Tchaikovsky's fourth symphony, so little known over here, but in leaving on one side the beloved 'Pathetic' he is rendering himself liable to cross-questioning from the very person for whom, presumably, this series is designated, the ordinary concert-goer who will wish for a description of the work he can often hear and so much admires. Perhaps the

'Pathetic' is reserved for another volume. Mr. Dunhill's booklets on Mozart's quartets are full of detailed analysis done in a rather arid manner, but with balanced judgment. Sir Henry Hadow is warmer, mixing an amusing number of side issues into the general flow of his scholarship. Mr. Fuller Maitland, in discussing Schumann's pianoforte works, is able to take in practically the whole span of that composer's working life and thus make his booklet into a kind of compressed biographical sketch. Mr. Cyril Winn might have done the same for Mendelssohn but prefers a short introduction placed before the main matter. Mr. Dickinson's study is minutely documented. Mr. Brent Smith follows his analysis of Schubert's C major symphony with that of two chamber works.

Notes on the Church Cantatas of John Sebastian Bach. By William S. Hannam. O.U. Press. 7s. 6d. net.

This is intended as a handbook for reference in the first place. The cantatas are dealt with in the order in which they appear in the Breitkopf edition, the keys of the arie are given with *tempo* and pitch ('aria' is here called 'song,' which is not exact) and the dates, when known. Further there are descriptive epithets labelling the movement: 'Simple but splendid,' or 'expresses rapturous joy.' Lastly, the sentence (p. 47): 'Suitable for performance (*sic*) and making converts' shows clearly the spirit of whole-hearted, almost proselytising, enthusiasm in which the book has been put together. It is well got up and has a useful classified index.

Sc. G.

Critical and Documentary Dictionary of Violin Makers Old and Modern.

By Henri Poidras, translated by Arnold Sewell. Thirty-six plates exclusive of text. Illustrations by A. Chalat. Price 30s., post free, 1928. (Editions de Luxe 40s., 45s., and 55s.) Rouen, Imprimerie de la Vicomté, 75, Rue de la Vicomté.

Whether a paucity of books on the subject (as stated) or a profound love of violins (as implied) was the real factor which led M. Henri Poidras of Rouen to compile his Dictionary does not much matter. Even if the bibliography were copious there would still be room for a good book, and therefore for this. The French original has recently been supplemented by a workmanlike translation into English. Poidras has the experience of 25 years as a player and expert to express; he has the concise, critical French mentality through which to express it. Into one sumptuous royal 8vo volume—rather perilously held together by paper backs in the current edition—he has marshalled facts, figures, facsimiles and pronouncements upon over 2,000 makers. It is one of the curious features of the violin that it develops the latent poet in all its devotees. So with Poidras. In his preface he explains the superiority of fine old violins over new ones with the fervour of a lover.

The central portion of the book is divided into lists of the Italian, English, German, and Miscellaneous Schools of Violin Makers, illustrated by adequate (though not distinguished) plates of famous violins, scrolls, &c. Comment is reduced to tabloid form. Even the great Stradivarius has but two pages allotted to him. The English makers,

unfortunately, have not been brought up to date. However, the pages devoted to facsimile labels, the lists of makers, books, and the chapter on the 'Denomination of the component parts of a bowed instrument' are thoroughly useful, though the statement that the head and neck *are in one piece* is true only of modern instruments. In former times violin necks were shorter by quite a quarter of an inch. Practically all old violins have been re-necked to suit modern pitch.

The volume is well got up, barring some misprints. 'Purring' for 'purfling' is amusing. A fiddle is not a piece of knitting! Jestings apart, while no dictionary can give the intuitive knowledge which only experts possess this one can, and does, provide a compendium of reliable information in a convenient form. It should prove a permanent standby for enthusiasts of the violin.

M. M. S.

A musician's narrative. By Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie. Cassell and Co. 15s. net.

The immense number of persons met by Sir Alexander Mackenzie with varying degrees of intimacy make these pages interesting alike for contemporaries and for later comers. The author seems, too, to have got something of lasting value from all these meetings. Otherwise he could not have described with evident pleasure his dealings with von Bülow, with Liszt, with Clara Schumann, Dvorák, Rubenstein and so many more. The recounting of a fully-occupied life such as this, with success to crown it all, must have a great charm for the writer. For the reader there will, of necessity, be a lessening of interest if the period under discussion is not his own. But Sir Alexander knows how to put things attractively and with a certain dry humour. The unavoidable blows of Fate are taken with philosophical resignation. The book is remarkable among its species for the harmlessness of its wit and the general kindness with which other people are taken into account.

Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms. Briefe aus den Jahren 1853-1896. Im Auftrage von Marie Schumann herausgegeben von Berthold Litzmann. 2 Bde. Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig. 1927.

Behind these letters there lurk two personalities, one—Clara's—fairly easy to apprehend, the other—Johannes'—hardly ever to be sensed at all. Both writers have built up a great fame and their legend has had the widest possible vulgarisation. The fields of their activities were contiguous but with confines stretching far out of their common sight. Clara spent her life as the exponent of rare pianistic gifts and as the receptacle of a tradition that even now persists. Johannes lived apart, and to this day practically nothing is known of his real feelings on life. Between him and the world there was, it would seem, only one medium of communication that he felt safe in employing, and that because of its quality of indefinable generalised expressiveness. Music was free from the danger of too close a self-revelation, whereas words were apt almost unnoticeably to draw aside the veil behind which he existed. Even to Clara he remained distant, for although his protestations of affection grow strong there is yet a palpable if unexpressed

assertion of confidences withheld and experiences unshared. Which, of reticence or inarticulateness, may have been cause or effect, the fact remains that disappointingly little of Brahms is to be found in these letters. Turning again to the volumes and seeking out salient dates in the lives of the two there is little that comes from the man's side to give a clear insight into his character. Schumann's death, his mother's death, Clara's death, they are all passed by, and their effect on Brahms never appeared on any other than music paper. We doubt that the letters which he destroyed would have been any more revealing. The written word was not his means of imparting intimacies. These two excellently produced volumes fill a gap in the literature of music. Their appearance is right and welcome for all that their content is disconcertingly shallow.

Beethoven-Handbuch. Von Theodor Frimmel. 2 bnde. Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig.

It is well nigh incredible that one man could have written these two thick, closely-printed volumes, some eight hundred pages in all. The book is worthy a place on reference shelves, for in it there may be found some sort of discussion on everything that touched Beethoven's life, nay more, his person, as let the reader turn up p. 400 of vol. 2 and read, surely with amusement, if not positive edification, the entry under 'Wanzen.' Looking through the volumes at random the article 'Brentano,' which deals with Bettina von Arnim and her family, is well written, giving necessary facts and keeping criticism, as is right in a book of reference, at arm's length.

Sc. G.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

Journal of the English Folk Dance Society. 2nd series. No. 1.
January, 1928.

The first number of this newly reconstructed journal has much in it that is of value, and with its pleasant form of print and paper is welcome. Mr. W. D. Croft reviews the progress of the Society during the last fifteen years. Mr. A. G. Gilchrist tells of the Lancashire Rushcart and Morris-dance in an article which has delightful illustrations, both musical and pictorial. At the end there is an extremely interesting note which gives Thomas Hardy's views as to the origin of country dancing.

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Sc. G.

The Music Trades Review.

The Music Trades Review (Duke Street, Adelphi) makes its jubilee number the occasion of many interesting observations about the growth of music here in the last fifty years. Mr. Keatley Moore is amusing about the advertisement power of 'The Maiden's Prayer' then and 'Hear my Prayer' now. Mr. Elkin remembers some queer things about pre-copyright days and Graham Bell's first mechanical reproduction. We are glad to read that the music trade is full of confidence, and that some other excuse than the strike of 1926 is needed for present-day bankrupts. We wonder mildly why it costs twice as much to send a gramophone to Dublin as to Calcutta or Vancouver; perhaps a harp costs less. And we echo the numerous expressions of goodwill printed in these pages, and headed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie's 'cordial felicitations.'

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Sc. G.

Gaceta Musical. (Paris: 252, rue du Faubourg, St. Honoré.) No. 1. January, 1928.

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J. B. T.

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translated by Herder and in that form used by Brahms for his song. Herr Hans Uldall contributes a useful paper on the early history of the pianoforte concerto. Herr Eduard Panzerbieter writes on Beethoven's first journey to Vienna in 1787, and of the persons he came into contact with during his stay. Herr Peter Panoff pleads eloquently for a closer study of the folk music of Russia and Bulgaria.

January, 1928.

An article by Herr Reitsch of Prague on Mozart's G major violin concerto is well documented to show the way in which the work is constructed. Herr Volkmann has been able to throw fresh light on Mozart's stay in Dresden in 1787, the same year in which Beethoven first came to Vienna. The new matter, dealing with Mozart's appearances at the court, has been unearthed from the State archives of Saxony. Herr Peter Epstein's article on Monteverdi's 'Lamento d'Arianna' is a scholarly appreciation of that work (dating from 1609, the year following Orfeo). The writer says: 'In the year 1608 so securely built an alliance of spoken dialogue with the singing voice was unexampled, showing an immeasurable advance on the attempts of Peri and Caccini, only ten years previous.'

February.

An article by Herr Richard Engländer brings light to bear on the career and works of the opera composer Joseph Schuster (1748-1812). Schuster worked in Dresden where he was born and died. Fairly late in life he went to Italy and studied under Padre Martini in Bologna. His period as Kapellmeister at Dresden comes between Hasse and Weber. In this article his dramatic works (opera seria, opera buffa and singspiel) are dealt with. It is worth noting that his violin sonatas formed part of Mozart's travelling baggage. An interesting article is contributed by Herr Hans Kuznitsky on E. T. A. Hoffmann's criticism of Spontini's and Weber's compositions. Herr Moritz Bauer writes on Brahms, with special regard to the latest literature on the subject, namely the Brahms-Clara Schumann letters, the 'Erinnerungen' of Eugenie Schumann, and Nagel's book on Brahms.

De Muziek. Amsterdam. December, 1927.

Following on Herr Haba's last article there is a long disquisition on quarter-tone music by the same writer-composer. He shows that for him the system is a positive one springing from an absolute and accurate oral apprehension of quarter-tones. He writes further on the scientific aspect of this system, and describes the pianoforte on which quarter-tone music can be performed, as well as the special composition classes he has superintended. It would seem that the new Ether instrument of Prof. Teremin should be of great value to Herr Haba. Sig. Gatti writes instructively on Malipiero, tracing his Venetian origin, the Teutonic influence of his youth, and the importance for his development of his first awakening to the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian composers.

January, 1928.

Heer Sem Dresden reviewing Haba's 'Neue Harmonielehre des diatonischen, chromatischen, viertel-, drittel-, sechstel- und zwölftel-Tonsystems' (Leipzig, 1927) has many interesting things to say about the structure of modern harmony, with examples from Debussy and

Ravel. M. Prunières's biographical article on Poulenc traces that young composer's career from pupilhood with Vifès, through Satie's influence and Cocteau's, to his position at the present day as 'one of the most talented and interesting representatives of the young French school.' Heer Sanders describes three new pianoforte concertos: by Casella, Hindemith and Pijper.

February.

Heer S. Kalf gives an historical survey of the Concertgebouw, the great Amsterdam concert hall whose fortieth year falls now, tracing its welfare from the beginning, when Willem Kes started, up to the present day with Mengelberg, Muck and Monteux. There follows a highly technical paper by Dr. K. P. Bernet Kempers on the structural methods of the Netherlands contrapuntists, in especial Clemens non Papa and Josquin.

Sc. G.

Il Pianoforte. Turin. November, 1927.

Sig. Andrea della Corte reviews the two volumes of Lorenz's *Alex. Searlatti's Jugendoper* in a lengthy article with illustrations. Sig. Chiereghin's historical sketch of the orchestra, started in the preceding number, is here concluded.

December, 1927.

Sig. Desderi writes on the contemporary composer Otto Siegl, an Austrian, born in 1895. Sig. Parigi has a short but pleasant notice on Manzoni and his feeling for music.

La Kassegna Musicale. No. 1. January, 1928.

This, an eighty-page monthly, is the new Italian review which is to replace the older thirty-page *Il Pianoforte*. We wish it every success. The style of the thing is good; clear print, strong paper, a well-arranged page. This first number has, among its five articles, two very good ones for the ordinary musical reader, one (on 'Proust and Music') for the more literary musician, and two for the scientist and critic. Sig. Pannain's detailed biographical sketch of Maurice Ravel, well illustrated, is an admirable example of what this kind of descriptive writing should produce. Sig. Perrachio's paper on Schubert's sonatas has the same qualities of clear, easy delineation. Sig. Debenedetti writes amusingly and at some length on Proust. The famous phrase in the Vinteuil sonata is again discussed. The whole article is delicately written, with a wide knowledge of the huge novel. Sig. Ronga contributes the first part of an article on Wagnerian criticism (that is, criticism of, not by, Wagner), and Sig. Parigi begins a serial on the relations existing between Music and Painting.

J. B. T.

La Revue Musicale. November, 1927.

The *Revue* is here seen occupied with some material that is new to its usual scope. M. Prunières gives up two pages to a review of gramophone records, and M. Schaeffner reopens the question of Jazz. There is an authoritative study by M. Cortot of Paul Dukas' pianoforte works. M. Ernest Closson adds an interesting note to Beethoven's life

in an article on the Belgian Coremans who knew the Master. There is a reprint of an eighteenth century pamphlet which is amusing enough.

December, 1927.

This number opens remarkably well with a description by M. André Gide of native dances at Lake Chad, in that writer's best style, nervous, tense, swift, worthy in every way of the author of *Les Fauz Monnayeurs*. In the British Museum and the library of Westminster Abbey M. Tessier has found traces of the activities in London of the seventeenth century composer Robert Cambert, and these discoveries he makes the basis of a useful article. Mme. Wanda Landowska puts in a strong plea for Bach's having written the Forty-eight not for the clavichord, but for the harpsichord. We have read M. Wyschnegradsky's article on Music and Pansonority three times and still cannot, owing to our inability to follow the train of his thought, find out the real meaning which (we are willing to admit) may lie behind what he has written.

January, 1928.

M. Pierre Mac Orlan's note on Popular Music is a delightful piece of writing. The theme is the devastating influence (for bad or good we know not, neither do we seem to care) let loose in even the most respectable homes by the introduction of wireless and gramophone records, by whose agency all the headiest jazz is brought into our midst. M. Maurice Emmanuel discourses on the use of modes in modern music. Before reading this article it were well to study the passage from Dukas' *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* (act one) which illustrates it. Students of modern French musical history would do well to read M. Koechlin's 'De la simplicité' if only for its discussion of the actual music of that period. M. de Schloezer's 'Notes en marge' is a suggestive collection of paragraphs written in a lively style on subjects which have a lasting interest and seem as far from solution as ever.

February.

The interest of this number centres in an article on Ockeghem by M. Dragan Plamenac. Little enough is known of this fifteenth century composer. Michel Brenet is responsible for the main research on the subject. To this there may be added a thesis for doctorate at Vienna University (1925) by the author of this article, who here adds information since gleaned as to the 36-part motet. M. Plamenac has had the good fortune to find a 'chant royal' written by a certain Nicolle Le Vestu in 1523 which, he holds, puts beyond doubt the fact that this 'motet exquis, chef d'œuvre de nature,' as Le Vestu calls it in his poem, did in reality exist and, further, was performed during Ockeghem's life-time and under his direction. The article has all the appearance of being a real contribution to musical history. M. André Coeuroy has an illuminating article on the latest developments in opera writing.

Sc. G.

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

The following abbreviations are used: Ch[ester], O.U.P. [Oxford University Press], Sch[irmer], Aug[ener], J.W. [Joseph Williams], Leo[nard], W.R. [Winthrop Rogers], Pax[ton], Cur[wen], Cra[mer].

Pianoforte.

There is something definite in the set of short pieces called 'Charivari' by John Locke [Ch.] and it is worth while for a pianist to find out what that something is, a mingling of pleasant form with pleasant harmonies, and an alert manner of expression which raises these little pieces out of the ordinary rut. E. J. Moeran can write excellently, but in 'Bank Holiday' and 'Summer Valley' [O.U.P.] he fluctuates between Grainger and Bax, and in the latter piece the smoothness of the writing is militated against by a plethora of notes for both hands which makes smoothness of playing very difficult. H. E. Randerson's 'Eclogue' [O.U.P.] belies its title, for it is dry stuff, not at all pastoral or poetic. The concert studies of Aurelio Giorni [Sch.] have already been noticed here. Nothing need be added in consideration of Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 now before us. They might be useful as an exercise for pianism, but hardly for interpretative ability. York Bowen's three preludes [O.U.P.] have inventive skill, and the first one a certain grandeur of conception which is worth both the composer's and the performer's while. It is agreeably startling to come on Hilda M. Cooper's 'Tarn Hows' [O.U.P.] for, short as it is, it has a hint of an interesting mentality behind it. Perhaps, even, it may point to a future which will not be without distinction. It has the faults of its compeers; a short scrappy tune doing the duty of real melody, too orchestral a treatment of the pianoforte. But it must be commended to the notice of pianists, and of those who are aware of present tendencies in home-made music and on the look-out for fresh talent. Frank Bridge, in 'The Spell' [Aug.], has written three pages of slow, expressive music, concise and satisfying. Two poems after Fiona Macleod by Lucile Crews [Sch.] have a harmonic interest which makes them worth trying, an echo of French inventions. 'March Wind' by Felix Swinstead, 'The undercurrent' by Cyril Jenkins [J.W.], and Arthur Baynon's 'Three sketches' [Leo.] are all equally pleasant picture pieces, the last-named as near to Mendelssohn as anyone would care to get nowadays. There are some pretty conceits of workmanship in Maurice Besly's suite 'Kensington Gardens' [W.R.]. Actually the music does not have much to say. Roy Agnew is a composer whose output shows no signs of decrease. He is here represented by five pianoforte pieces ranging in difficulty from 'A

dance impression,' which would tax the powers of a good player, to 'Rabbit Hill,' suitable for a fairly advanced school child. For school use Eric Mareo's 'By the mountain side' [Aug.], Paul Edmond's 'Three Minuets' [Aug.], Thomas Dunhill's 'Playmates' [Pax.], and Archy Rosenthal's 'Cameos' are possible material. The Oxford Piano Series [O.U.P.] consists of a graded set of school pianoforte pieces. Those before us now all seem good stuff, probably of interest and amusement to young people, presumably chosen with an eye to eliminating sentimental rubbish. Thomas Wood's three plain tunes stand out from among the others. Guy Weitz, in 'Dans la chambre aux jouets' [Herelle, Paris] shows how French composers do the same kind of child's piece. In three selections of cinema music sent us [Pax.] we had hoped to find evidence of a new venture in this type of construction (for such it has to be: the skilful fitting of stretches of bars to definite expanses of screen action). But nothing of that sort is here. Messrs. Howard Carr, and Maurice Whinlaw have simply provided vamp accompaniments such as already lull cinema audiences, and there is no attempt to seek, let alone to find, what is to be the new cinema music which shall adequately accompany the generalised emotions of the film without slavishly and ridiculously following every turn and twist of experience and expression.

There remains a set of arrangements. Walter Rummel is responsible for three transcriptions of orchestral and choral movements by J. S. Bach [Ch.], all very efficiently done, of a difficulty which seems unnecessary. Donald C. Powell has arranged 'O Gott, Du frommer Gott' for pianoforte. He, too, is inclined to overweight the part-writing by adding octaves, or rather by letting octave passages in the bass run on continuously when they might well be eased up in many cases.

Three settings for two pianofortes of movements by Mozart and Beethoven have reached us [Sch.], but as only one copy of each publication has been sent it has been impossible to take them to a brace of instruments and thus get a worthy idea of the arrangements. We agree with Prof. Tovey that pianoforte music needs playing right out for full acquaintance, being some of the most difficult to gauge with the mental ear. And so we must deny ourselves the pleasure of judging these three arrangements.

Songs.

In his setting of five poems by Thomas Hardy [O.U.P.] John Ireland has added something of great dignity to English song writing. The music has an irresistible sincerity. It is impossible to overcome the feeling that behind it all there is unique, first-hand spiritual experience. The words are a difficulty, almost too inflexibly plain and rigid to be mated to any other sound than that of the speaking voice. Difficult, too, is the music, but from another point, taxing the capacities of singer and player to an immense degree. For all that, these songs will be found worthy a struggle by the most adequate artists, and to live with them daily for some months will be time gained. Peter Warlock is another song-writer whose work is of significant importance. He has a larger output than John Ireland and is not always equal to the mass of composition he gets through. In the seven songs [O.U.P.] and thirteen transcriptions from sixteenth and seventeenth century com-

posers before us [Cur.] there are thin patches. But he may be trusted to bring to his editing the finest scholarship, and his own songs seldom reach the ballad level. 'Fair and true' shows a side of his nature which surprises one in the author of the beautiful 'Corpus Christi,' set for soprano, tenor and string quartet [Cur.] In this song he stoops to masquerade in clothes not his own, setting a simple tune with queer harmonies, pretty in themselves but tortuously pushed and twisted from bar to bar until one wonders that he did not either seek a tune more in keeping with the accompaniment or *vice versa*. It is a habit he has caught from Delius. 'My own country' is thoroughly sentimental, though here the tune is left to sing itself. 'Ha'nacker Mill' is well done but nearer the fancy-dress style than the last-named song. 'The night' has great charm. 'Jillian of Berry' is attractive by reason of its fine use of an unusual rhythmic effect. Pleasant recollections of hearing four songs from A. E. Housman's 'Shropshire Lad' by C. W. Orr [O.U.P.] sung at Amen House some months back are revived by going through the scores. They grow on one and have a curious property of haunting one's thoughts after being played over half-a-dozen times, an exercise which they easily inveigle one into. There is little to choose between them for goodness. Two settings of French words may be taken next. Lennox Berkeley's treatment of the exquisite 'D'un vanneur de blé aux vents' [O.U.P.] is simply and discreetly adorned with modern harmonic effects, which is right, seeing how the words speak alone, needing the minimum of musical aid. Dennis Arundell calls his set 'Four old French songs set to music by —' [O.U.P.] so that one is left in doubt as to whether he is responsible for melody as well as the rest. The songs have great delicacy and point, and the words are perfect.

Next there is a mass of English songs of a slightly different class from those above, appealing to a simpler type of mind. Roger Quilter (here represented by 'Music when soft voices die' [W.R.]) a song in his wonted gentle style) is responsible for much of the peculiarly soft and caressing methods of these composers. In varying degrees they have undergone his easy influence, without, however, always being able to find the secret of his unimpeachable technique. John Dennismore's 'Spring fancy' [W.R.], E. Beck-Slinn's 'Widow bird' [Aug.], Paul Edmonds's 'Come live with me' [Aug.], all these belong to that category. Herbert Brewer's cycle 'For your delight' [Aug.] has a similar grace, demanding little of either singer or audience. In setting James Joyce's 'I hear an army charging upon the land' Sidney Harrison has succeeded very well in mirroring the poem's fineness; a good song [Cra.], 'Fairy tales' by the same composer is not so authentic, with a rather poor accompaniment [Cra.]. From among four songs by Martin Shaw [Cra.], 'Accursed wood' is the best, a bold piece of characterisation which seems to have been done with one sweep of the brush. Not so free and vigorous, but in its way good, is the 'Lament.' Geoffrey Shaw has selected Blake's 'To see the world in a grain of sand' [Cra.], a dangerously simple set of lines to treat musically, almost certain to make the hearer feel, as here, that they were better left alone even by a composer who can as discreetly retire as this one does. Armstrong Gibbs can generally be relied on for good workmanship, and his 'Birch tree' [Cur.] is a pleasant example of his manner, with a decorative accompaniment. From the same firm there are singable works by Cecil Hazelhurst ('Buttercup

fields') and Francis George Scott, whose song, called 'Hungry Waters,' is a thoroughly good piece of writing.

American songs seem to be much as interesting as our own, and those before us show none of the astonishing developments which have taken place in orchestral composition over there. Carl McKinley's two songs ('Reverie' and 'The nightingale') [Sch.] are quite expressive picture music, pleasant to sing and play through once. Aurelio Giorni is represented by two songs ('Night' and 'Awakening') [Sch.] whose pianoforte part is probably the more important, certainly the more difficult. 'Patrolling Baruegat' by Eugene Bonner [Sch.] has this about it that the words by Walt Whitman are fine, though the musician in this case can hardly be said to have matched his genius with the poet's. Samuel R. Lewis goes to Masefield for his words to 'Cavalier' [Sch.] and makes out of it all an amusing, jaunty piece of work, too rigid and square for continued interest. 'Four Tuscan Rispetti' by George Harris [Sch.] have most of the interest put into the variegated and difficult pianoforte part, though the voice (a high one) has no easy time of it. The third song would probably turn out the best of the set.

Pierre Maurice, in setting 'Sept poésies chinoises' [O.U.P.] has endeavoured to combine Chinese musical 'effects' (open fifths, monotonous rhythms, &c.) with the mannerisms of modern French song writers, and has not been successful. He has been ill-advised to attempt so impossible a task. These songs might sound more convincing with the orchestral accompaniment by which presumably they were meant to be aided. Poldowski has an immense number of songs on her list. Three here ('To love,' 'A Clymène' and 'Narcisse') [Ch.] show how well she can do this sort of thing, with a sure touch, a nice sense of style, and much inventive power in the pianoforte parts (not so much in the string quartet writing in 'Narcisse').

There remains a set of 'Arias from the operas of Handel' [O.U.P.] edited by W. G. Whittaker, with translations by Albert G. Latham (the original text printed also). This is a thoroughly good series, very properly edited with notes, accompaniments which show what is Handel, what Whittaker, clear print, besides being a treasure-chest of magnificent pieces.

Sc. G.

Philip de Monte.

The proprietors of *Musica Sacra* (MM. Desclée, de Brouwer et Cie, Bruges) are putting out a number of excellent musical supplements, and four works by the Fleming De Monte, a friend and contemporary of Orlandus Lassus, have reached us. They are as follows:—

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| No. 1. | Mass | { | 'Inclina cor meum' à 5 (S.A.T.T.B.). |
| No. 2. | Motet | | |
| No. 3. | Motet, | 'O bone Jesu' à 6 (S.S.A.T.T.B.). | |
| No. 5. | Mass, | 'Sine nomine' à 4 (S.A.T.B.). | |

The prices in Belgian francs are 10, 1.50, 3.50 and 5 respectively. The editions are produced with extreme care, on an unusually small page (8 x 6), but the engraving is of the usual size; and the masses are

bound in cloth, forming very delightful volumes with their quaint reproductions of the old title-pages, portrait and so forth.

De Monte's music, which has been fully edited for choral performance by Canon van Nuffel, musical director of Malines Cathedral, is robust and flowing. Perhaps the chief feature is an absence of the diffusiveness which characterises (and possibly mars the perfection of) so much church music of the sixteenth century. In this direction he is, perhaps, influenced by Lassus. The mass 'Sine Nomine' is indeed a model of length, and is of but moderate difficulty. In the Creed, *Crucifixus* to *dexteram Patris*, is set for S.A.T., and the soprano divides for the Hosannas. The motet *O bone Jesu* is divided into three separate movements, and contains (e.g., §2, bars 20-22, §3, bar 12) passages of exquisite beauty. The five-part mass, and the motet on which it is founded, are rather more extended in form, but freer from cliché, and have an interesting countersubject introduced forthwith in the alto part. *Et incarnatus* is set in homophonic style, a very effective contrast.

We hope that more numbers of this fine and useful series will appear. De Monte has not yet been edited for modern use, with the exception of the six-voice mass *Benedicta es*, put out by Dr. A. Smijers in 1920, and some motets in Van Maldegheem. He was a prolific composer, and far too great a man to be allowed to rest in obscurity. We congratulate the learned Canon on his work.

A. H.

Organ music.

A theme and variations by E. d'Arba [Ch.] poses some mildly interesting problems for the concert organist (as distinct from the church organist and his cinema relation). But the actual theme is not very vital, and the variations are nearer studies than inspired movements. This composer falls into the strange mistake of writing octave passages for the manuals, which is redundant for the organ where a simple direction as to registration would make the passage sound in double or triple octaves with no expense of extra ink. Edward Barnes does the same thing in his third suite [Sch.], but here it is only a passing error in what is really a very nice piece of organ writing, quite worthy (especially as regards the first two movements) the attention of organists in search of modern works. C. Charlton Palmer's third set of Old English Hymn Tunes [Pax.] consist in short voluntaries in a pleasantly firm style, useful for church purposes. There is also an edition [O.U.P.] of Handel's organ concertos prepared by Dr. Stanley Roper.

Solo instruments and pianoforte.

Norman Fraser's 'Cueca' [Ch.] for two violins and pianoforte has been heard in public and is effective. There is little in it except a delightful lilt and a pretty tune. Poldowski's 'Pastorale' for clarinet and pianoforte also has nothing in it but prettiness. It is all very Spanish and sombre and unrestrained, good amusement for the clarinet player. Vaughan Williams's 'Concerto Accademico' [O.U.P.] is here seen in an arrangement for violin and pianoforte by Constant Lambert which seems a sound and just piece of work, with everything in it that should be required for practice purposes. A

'Kammermusikdichtung' by Karl Grimm [Kistner und Siegel, Leipzig] is extremely full of notes, through which it is hard going in search of what meaning may lurk in the midst of such a tangle. The foundation of the thing is some lines from Dante and the title reads 'für Violine und Klavier mit einem Vorspruch und einem Epilog für Sprechstimme und Gesang.'

Of school music there are three suitable minuets by Paul Edmonds for two violins, violoncello and pianoforte [Aug.], very useful stuff for school ensemble work. The same composer has a Cradle song for violin and pianoforte, rather more advanced but still for school use. Four Easy Pieces by Edmund Duncan-Rubbra [O.U.P.] are very good indeed, so far and away above the ordinary as to make us wish for more. Teachers should be able to make something of these pieces.

Sc. G.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

H.M.V.

Orchestral. Humperdinck: *Hänsel and Gretel* Overture (Albert Coates and the Symphony Orchestra). The interpretation is in the large symphonic manner, with little if any thought for the fairy tale of the opera. This is the right interpretation, when the overture is taken as a concert piece.

Weber: *Invitation to the Waltz* (Stokowsky and the Philadelphia Orchestra). Here is the performance for which the gramophone world has been waiting. The music throbs with beauty and strength, and the tone is glorious.

Wagner: *Tristan* Prelude (Otto Klemperer and the Berlin Opera House Orchestra). This also is a performance for which gramophonists have waited. The record fills four sides, and the piece is presented to us as if it were a series of four sonnets through which the thought proceeds to the powerful climax of the third, and then subsides into the quietude of the last.

Holst: *The Planets*, 'Mercury' and 'Uranus,' and the 'Dance of the Spirits of Earth' from *The Perfect Fool* (Albert Coates and the Symphony Orchestra). Coates understands the fantasy that is at the back of Holst's music, and he therefore presents it in the right way. The new system of recording, and the new instruments, make it easy for the gramophone to receive and return the composer's brilliant use of the orchestra.

Brahms: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (Casals and the London Symphony Orchestra). We in England know little of Casals as a conductor, though his fame for the concerts he directs in Barcelona has reached us. The composition he has selected for the purpose of his entry into the ranks of conductors for the gramophone is one that enables him to reveal his musicianship only, not his virtuosity as a conductor; this was to be expected of Casals, and those of us who know his 'cello playing and are familiar with the variations can feel at every turn his fine mind and exquisitely refined conception of music. This Brahms could hardly be successful by

itself, because it is rather 'severe' music; but the recent great popularity of the recording of the Fourth Symphony will help it enormously.

Columbia

Schubert: *Rosamunde* Overture (Sir Hamilton Harty and the Hallé Orchestra). An earnest, vivacious interpretation, in the largest concert style.

Cherubini: *Anacreon* Overture (Willem Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra). The issue of this record had a surprising sequel—the overture introduced Cherubini to the general world of music lovers who use only the gramophone, to which he had clearly been a stranger hitherto, and the record made them ask for more of the same. The exact and sure phrasing of Mengelberg's orchestra are just what the music wants.

Debussy: *Iberia* (Paul Klenau and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra). The music is an 'evocation' of the spirit of Southern Spain. It was the French composers, Debussy and Ravel, who revealed to the Spanish musicians how their native folk-song and the peculiar poetry of their country could best be passed into music; and so Debussy's *Iberia* might serve as a guide into the 20th century art-music of Spain; but it is altogether charming in itself, and Klenau's interpretation is that of a master of this modern music.

Mozart: the *Jupiter* Symphony (Sir Dan Godfrey and the Symphony Orchestra). A plain, strong, serviceable performance of Mozart, of the kind that seems better and better the more you remain with it.

Parlophone

Wagner: *Lohengrin* Prelude (Artur Bodanzky and the Berlin Opera House Orchestra). Bodanzky creates to perfection the *sostenuto* of this most sustained piece of writing, and his climax is therefore exceptionally impressive.

Wagner: *Mastersingers* Prelude (the same). Another aspect of Bodanzky's genius is displayed here, in the passage

of the apprentices, which in his hands becomes a true scherzo.

Weber: *Preciosa Overture* (Weissmann and the Grand Symphony Orchestra).

H.M.V.

Instrumental. Pianoforte. Pouishnoff: Rachmaninoff's *Polichinelle* and *Prelude in B flat*; Paderewski: his own *Minuet*, Op. 14, No. 1, and Schelling's *Nocturne a Raguse*.

Harpsichord. Wanda Landowska: 'Harmonious Blacksmith,' Handel—an amazing example of the harpsichord and of its fitness for the gramophone.

Violin. Kreisler: his own *Caprice Viennois*.

Cello. Casals: *Toccata*, Bach; *Goyescas*, *Intermezzo*, Granados.

Organ. Guy Weitz: *Chorale* No. 3, César Franck.

Columbia

Piano. William Murdoch: *Military March*, Schubert.

Cello. Antoni Sala: *Sonata*, Porpora.

Viola. Tertis: *Berceuse*, Arensky, and *Melodrame*, Guiraud.

String Quartet. Catterall: 'My joyful heart,' Bach.

Vocal. The overwhelming amount of vocal music recorded during the

past three months renders it practically impossible to make a representative selection. Every record created by a gifted singer nowadays is a good record. We have therefore only to select, each for himself, the song or the singer we want.

But Richard Tauber's twelve numbers from the Schubert *Winterreise* (Parlophone) stand apart from all others by reason of Tauber's superb lyrico-dramatic gifts. Chaliapine in the death of Don Quixote (H.M.V.) offers so moving a performance that one forgets the music. Emilio de Gogorza is happy in di Capua's old Neapolitan song, *O Sole mio* (H.M.V.), and a particularly delightful waltz song is provided by Lucrezia Bori in Pestalozzi's *Ciribiribin* (H.M.V.). The breadth of Giordani's *Caro mio ben* agrees well with Madame d'Alvarez' voice and manner. Norman Allin's *Erl King* (Columbia) is powerful singing, yet not too powerful.

The old folk-song on which Delius based his *Brigg Fair* has been recorded by the Oriana Madrigal Choir (H.M.V.), and the chorus of *La Scala* have recorded the number from Boito's *Mefistofele* (Columbia), which is cast in the rhythm of the Polish obertas—it is the 'Il bel giovanetto' chorus.

S. G.

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